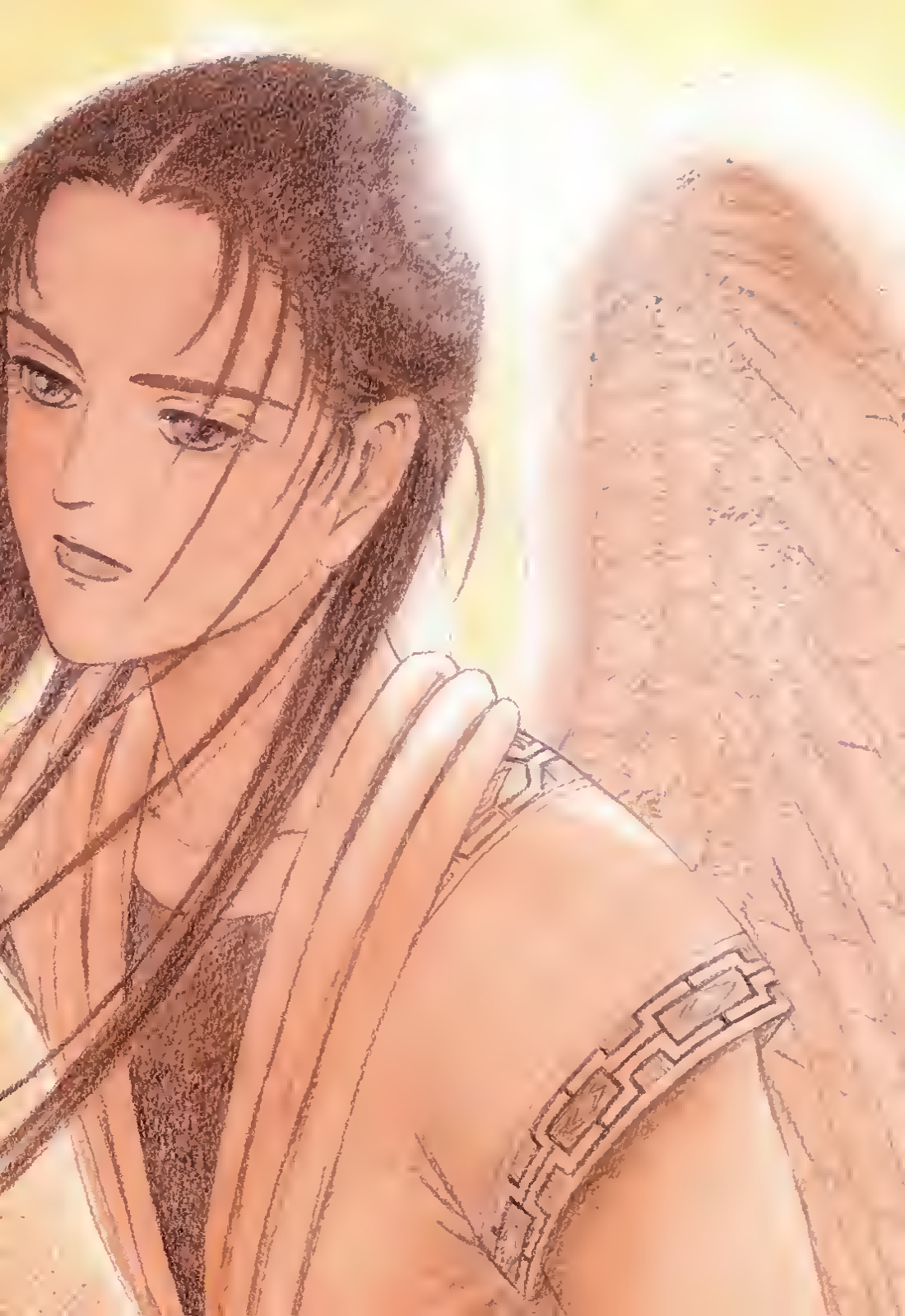
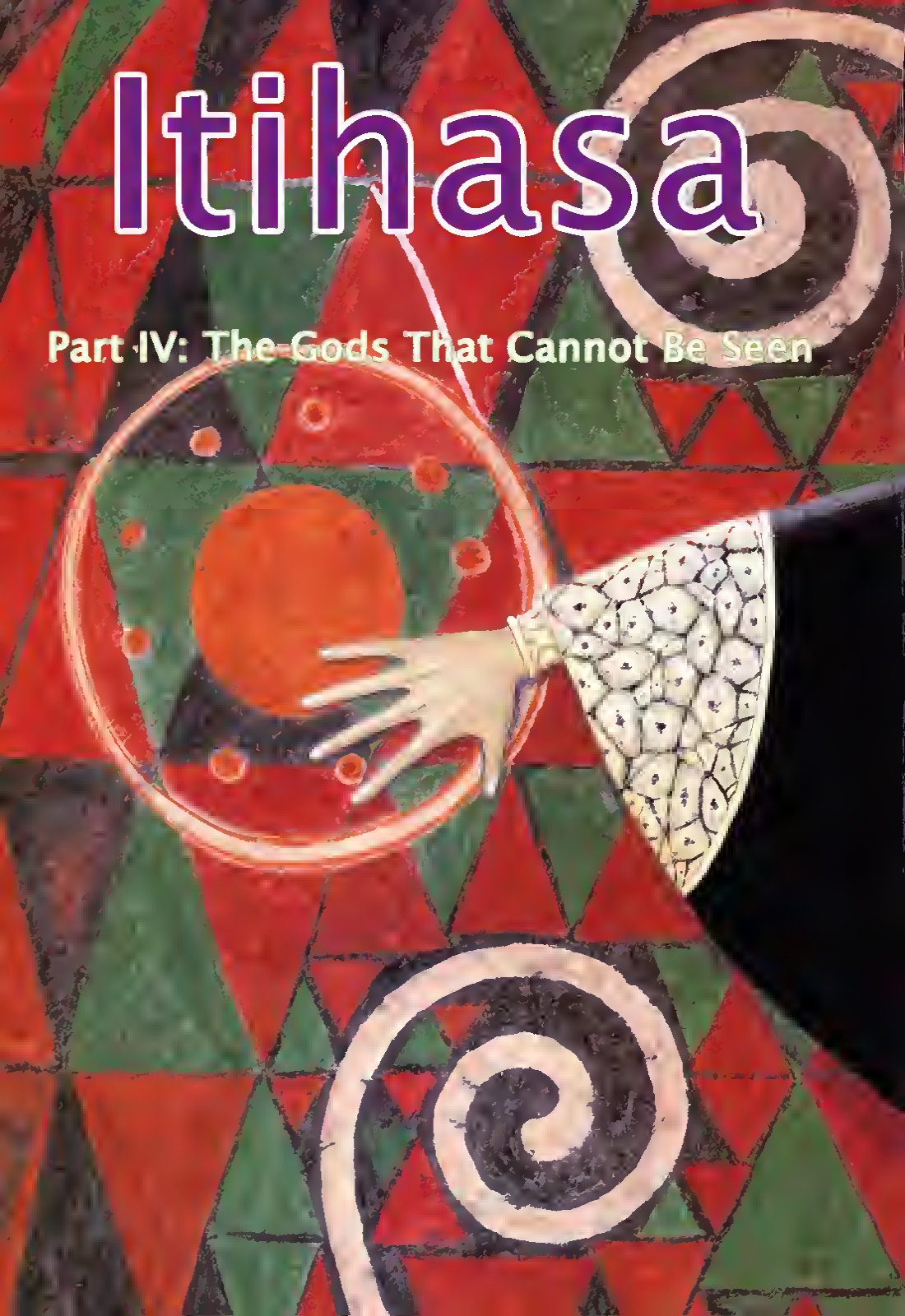
Itihasa 11

Wakako Mizuki



Itihasa

Part IV: The Gods That Cannot Be Seen



Recap & Main Characters

As foretold by an oracle two generations ago, the gods that can be seen—divided into the warring demigods and demon gods—have traveled to this once-peaceful island, and the kind-hearted tribes who worship the gods that cannot be seen have become embroiled in their war. Toko's tribe is attacked by the Kiyu Faction, a group of demon gods under Kiyu the Silver Horned God.

Takaya, Toko and Aohiko, who were in the mountains looking for yang stones and escaped the attack, meet the demigod Risson, God of the True Law, and his warriors (including Katsura and Ichirota). The three decide to join the group in its pursuit of the demon gods....

One day, Takaya is badly injured and near death. To save him, Toko chants a mantra that transfers her own life force to him. As a result, Toko herself is left in serious condition. As she hovers between life and death, another Toko (!?) appears and guides her towards life. Her other self tells her that they are fated to kill each other when they meet again....

Katsura falls in love with Aohiko. However, conscious of the dark fate that will swallow him up in a few years' time, Aohiko is unable to accept her feelings. On hearing this, Katsura privately vows to hide her feelings and protect Aohiko for as long as she lives.

One day, over seven years later, a hermit named Misen looks into Toko's past. Toko learns she has a twin who was kidnapped as a child and turned into one of Kiyu's warriors.... Takaya is kind as ever to Toko in her state of shock, unaware that she has come to love him as more than just a brother. One day, shaken by the appearance of a woman named Kiriko, Toko confesses her feelings to Takaya, creating a rift between the two. However, when Kiriko dies of an illness, Toko resolves to make a fresh start as Takaya's little sister.

Takaya and Toko are surrounded by the demon god's warriors, and Toko comes face to face with her twin, Yoko. In agony over both their separate lives, Toko is run through by a crazed Yoko's spear. However, Toko's soul enters Yoko, and Yoko becomes convinced that she is Toko.

Meanwhile, Aohiko engages Kiyu's army all by himself and is taken captive.

Then wings abruptly grow from Takaya's back. Like Kai, Takaya has Mamana blood in his veins.

Because Toko has borrowed Yoko's body, and Yoko has been fitted with a demon headband, Toko is compelled to kill people. Then Yachio appears to Toko. Yachio is the one who knows the divine names of all the gods and who does what must be done. Yachio tells Toko to go to Fuji. However, her shock is so great that she falls into a deep sleep.

Aohiko, who is believed to hold Toko's secret, is very nearly killed by Hibiki, but thanks to Kimika's quick thinking, Ichirota saves him. Borrowing Aohiko's power, Toko releases her own life, choosing to live as both Toko and Yoko.

Meanwhile, in order to save Toko and Aohiko, Takaya, who has been entrusted with Risson's divine name, sets off for Shangri-La at Fuji with Katsura.

Takaya, Katsura and Kai are traveling to Fuji on foot.

In a village along the way, they meet Tamia, a girl with Mamana blood, and her father, Hakuji. The encounter strengthens their thoughts for the as-yet-unseen land of Fuji and for Amane, the God of Universal Good. Meanwhile, Mida, a demon god that serves Kiyu, manipulates Hibiki and attempts to make him kill Aohiko. Toko that Mida released, and is summoned by Kiyu. Toko senses severs the light wavelength. One night, Takaya saves the demigod Kaguya, the despair and deep sadness that fill Kiyu's same time, Aohiko temporarily loses his mind under the who was about to be erased by Yachio. At the nearer. Takaya decides to leave Katsura, Kai and Tamia and moon, and realizes that his doom is drawing press on towards Fuji with Kaguya.

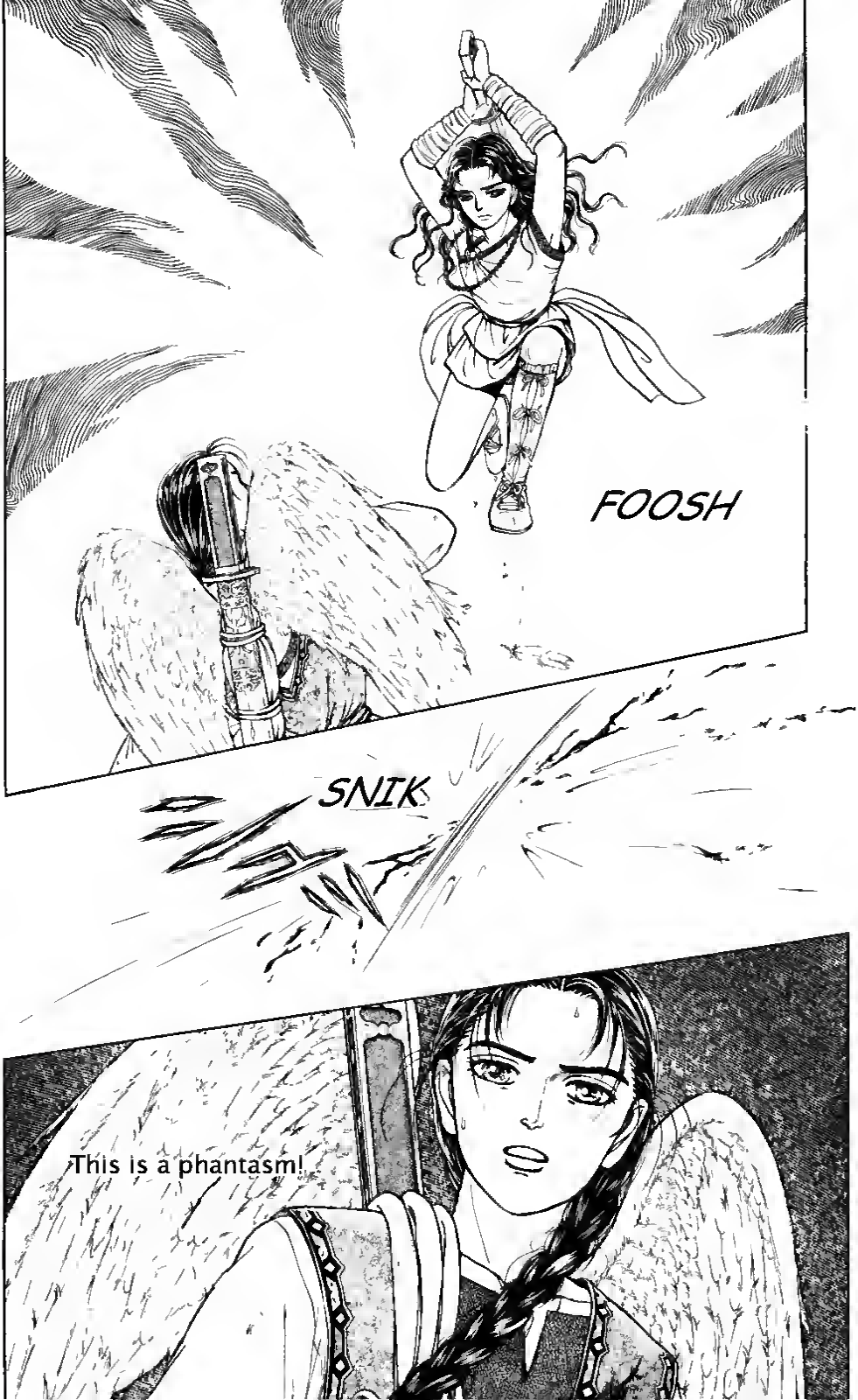
●To get all the details, check out the deluxe editions of Ichiasa Volumes 1 to 10 (on sale now)!

Takaya has finally reached the forest of illusory mists that spreads over the plains below Fuji. He parts with Kaguya and enters the forest alone. There, a phantasm of Toko appears and vanishes, leading Takaya astray. Meanwhile, Kusuto, an individual who built the village of Fuji with Amane, is about to awaken....

Mantra: a mysterious spell received from the gods that cannot be seen

"Yin Stone: special stones that have negative energy. Their power is manifested through mantras.
Demon Headband: a headband Kiyu sets on his demon god warriors' foreheads. When these warriors are wounded, they go berserk."

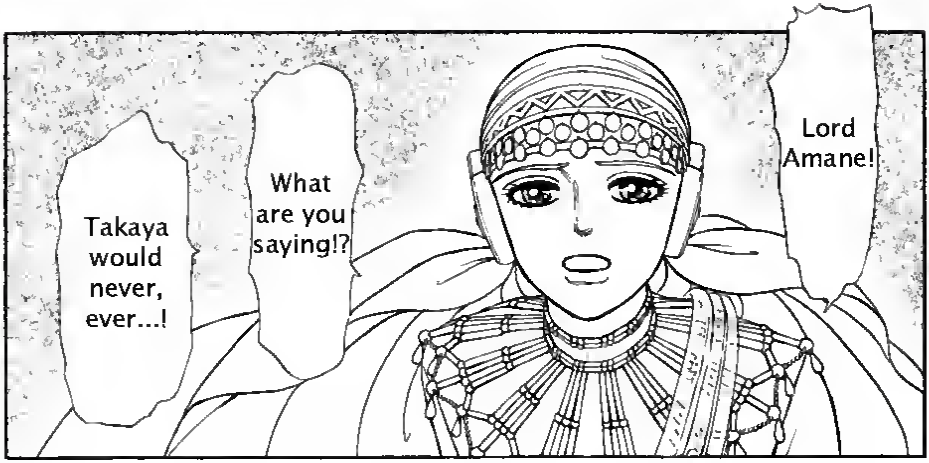
Stop!
No matter what you are...
...that looks like her!
I can't cut anything...

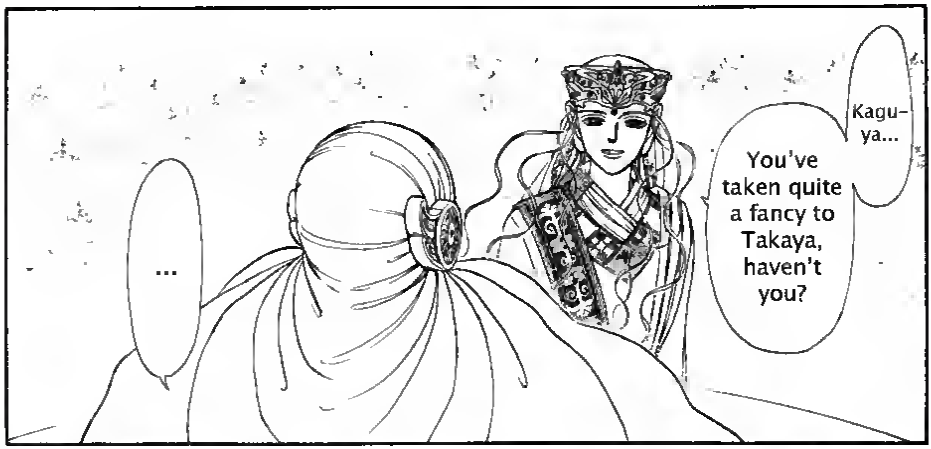

FOOSH
SNIK
This is a phantasm!

WHIRR
But...
WHIRR
That sword, too...
SNIK
That's real!
The malice that flows in its tip...
What am I supposed to do!?
What do you want me to do!?

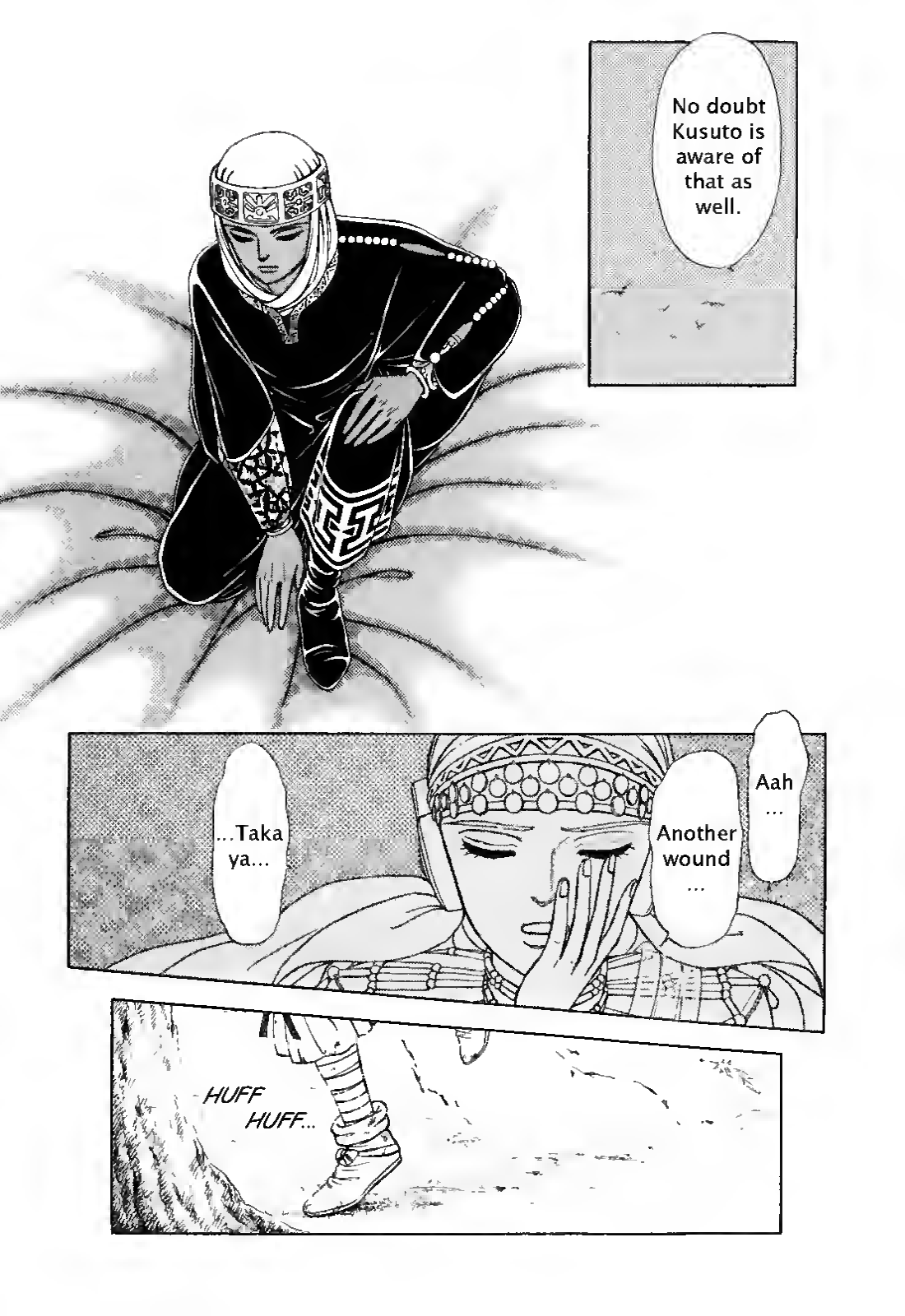
Pray, Takaya...
Call Lord Amane's name and ask for her help.
An illusion, attacking its source...
This has never hap-pened before.
...Lord Amane ...
...

Kusto must think this is necessary for Takaya.
Kusuto ...
...It's Kusuto.
What a terrifying power...
Takaya is no different.
He's a double-edged sword.
One who cuts demon gods can cut demigods as well...


Lord Amane!
What are you saying!?
Takaya would never, ever...!


Kagu-ya...
You've taken quite a fancy to Takaya, haven't you?
...

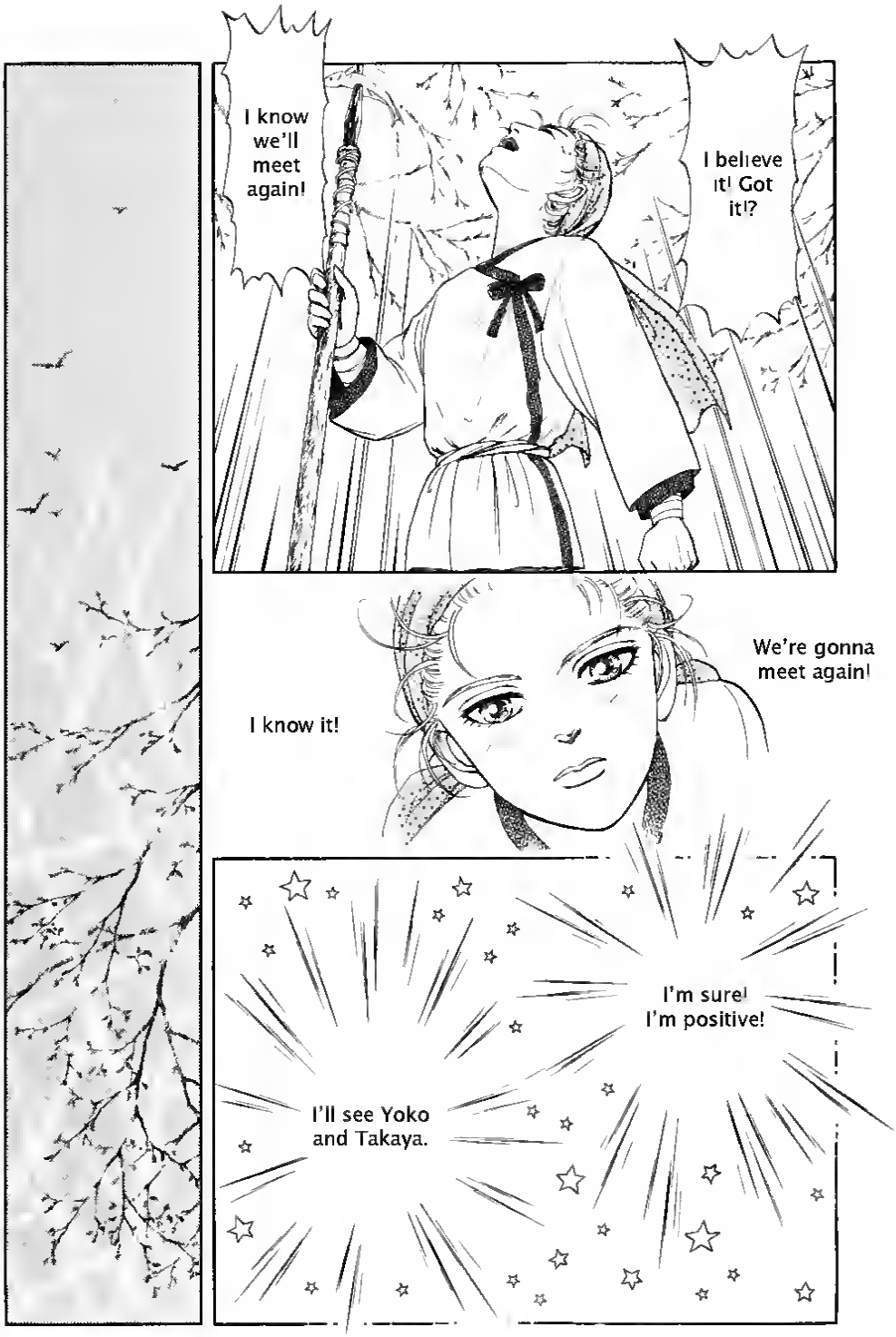
Have no fear.
I do not think he would either.
Takaya's wave-length is strangely gentle...

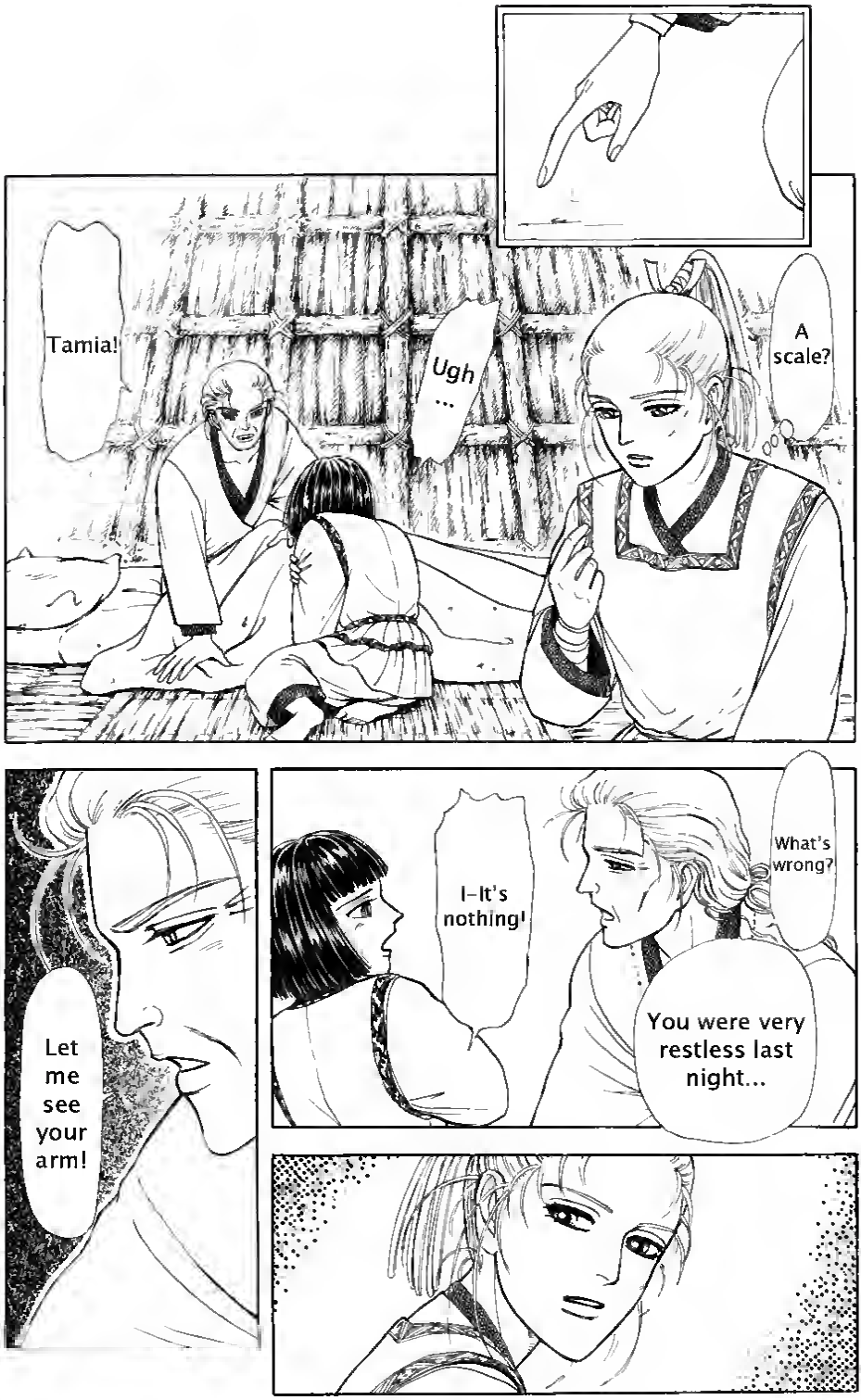

No doubt Kusuto is aware of that as well.
Aah ...
Another wound ...
...Taka ya...
HUFF HUFF...

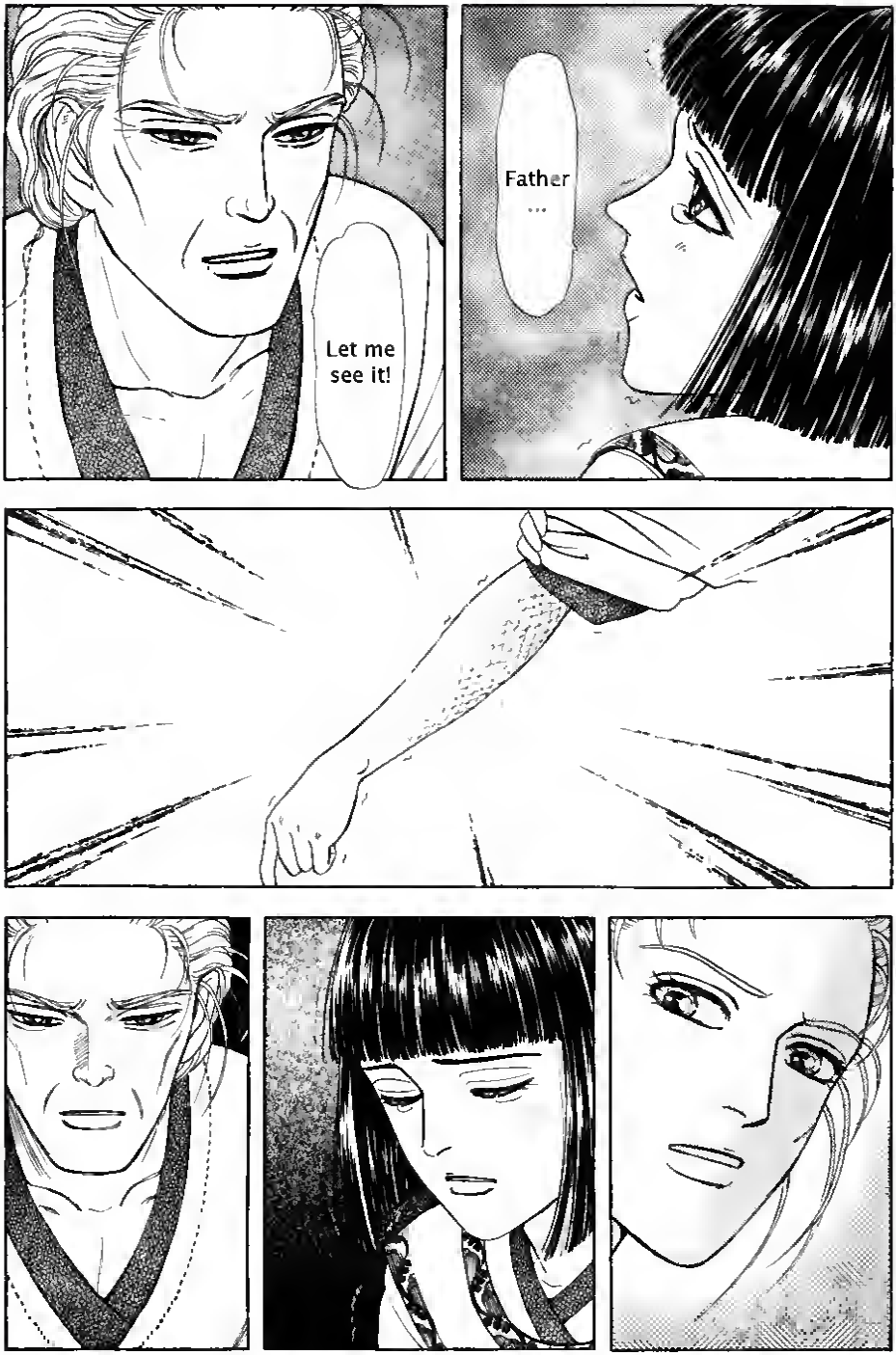
I'll leave this to Kusuto.
Kusuto's discretion has never been mistaken.
Yes... my lord...
HUFF...
HUFF
HUFF

ピチャン
SPLISH
SNIK

That's twenty-four in a row!
Got it!
I. Am. Awesome!
Heh-hehn!
...
Man, I wish Takaya was here to see this.

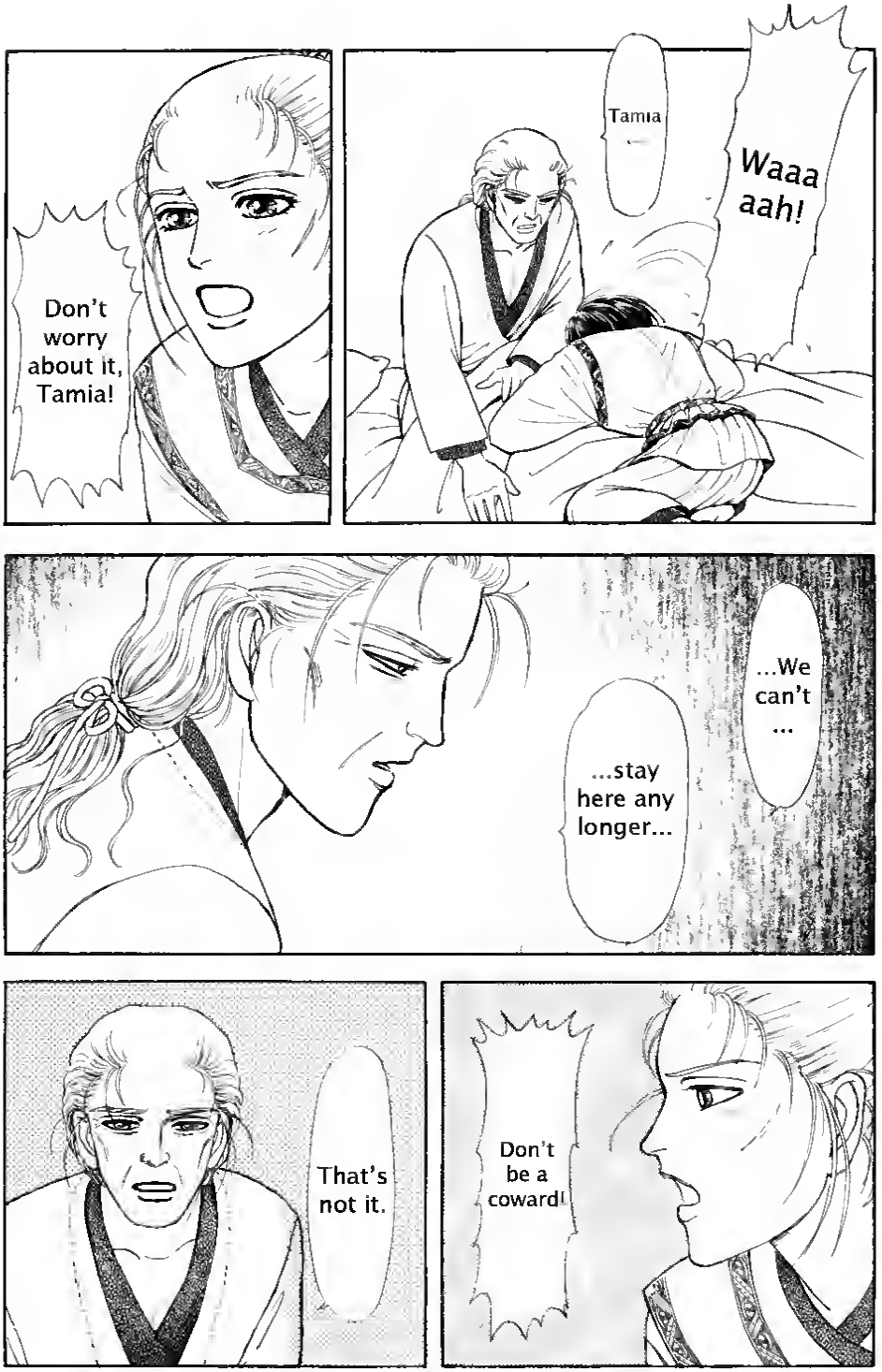

I know we'll meet again!
I believe it! Got it!?
We're gonna meet again!
I know it!
I'm sure! I'm positive!
I'll see Yoko and Takaya.

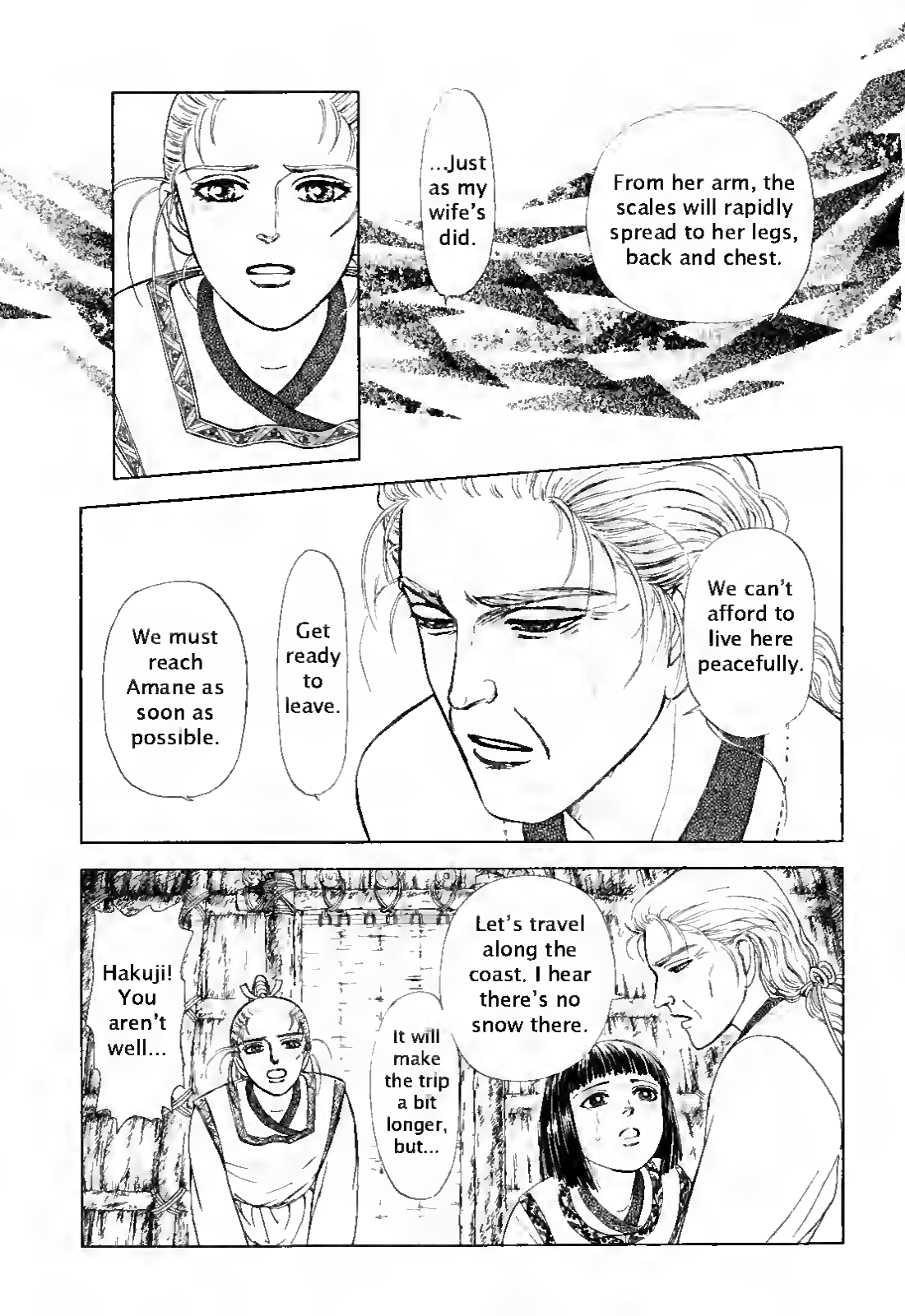

Tamia!
Ugh ...
A scale?
Let me see your arm!
I-It's nothing!
What's wrong?
You were very restless last night...


Let me see it!
Father
...

Katsu-ra!
Come eat break-fast with us...
Oh!

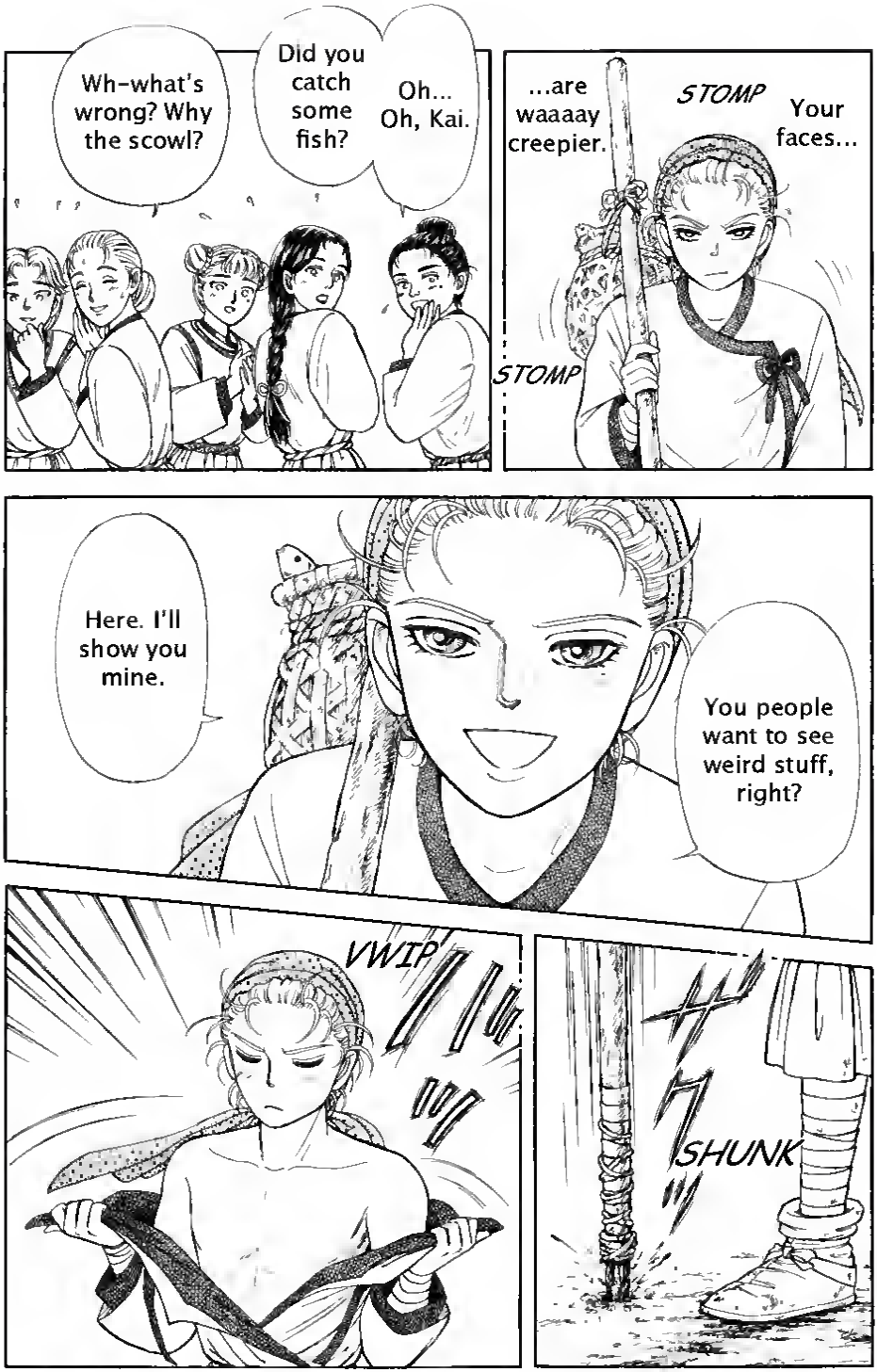
We'll have breakfast here!
Kai's out catching fish, so we'll...
SHUF SHUF SHUF
All right.
I see...
I... I see...
UGK...
That girl had scales on her arm...
My! My! My!


Don't worry about it, Tamia!
Tamia
Waaa aah!
...We can't ...
...stay here any longer...
That's not it.
Don't be a coward!

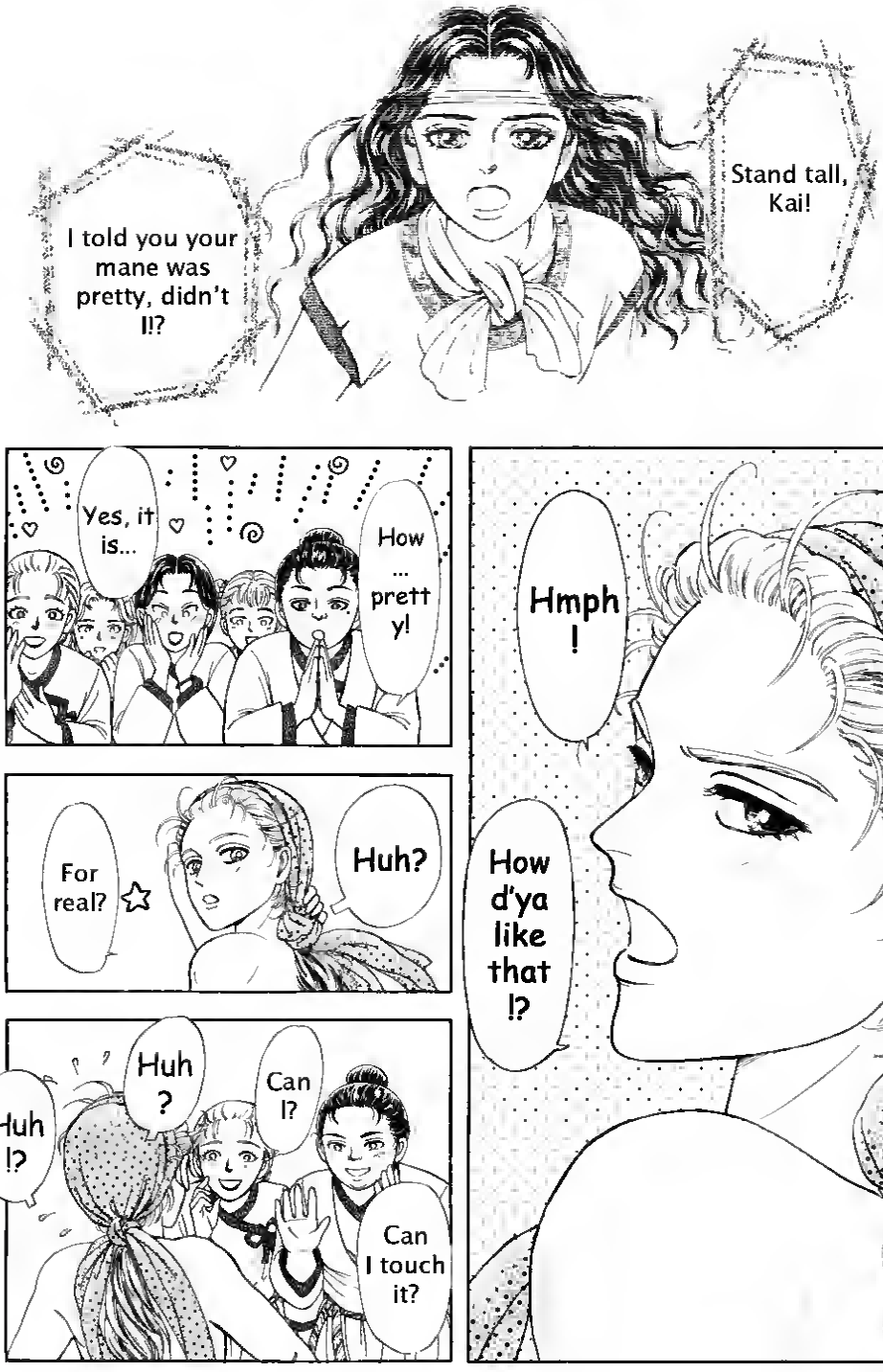

...Just as my wife's did.
From her arm, the scales will rapidly spread to her legs, back and chest.
We must reach Amane as soon as possible.
Get ready to leave.
We can't afford to live here peacefully.
Hakuji! You aren't well...
It will make the trip a bit longer, but...
Let's travel along the coast. I hear there's no snow there.

It's all right ...
I'm fine!
Thanks to the medicinal teas, I'm much better.
Father ...
La La
What a haul!
What a catch!

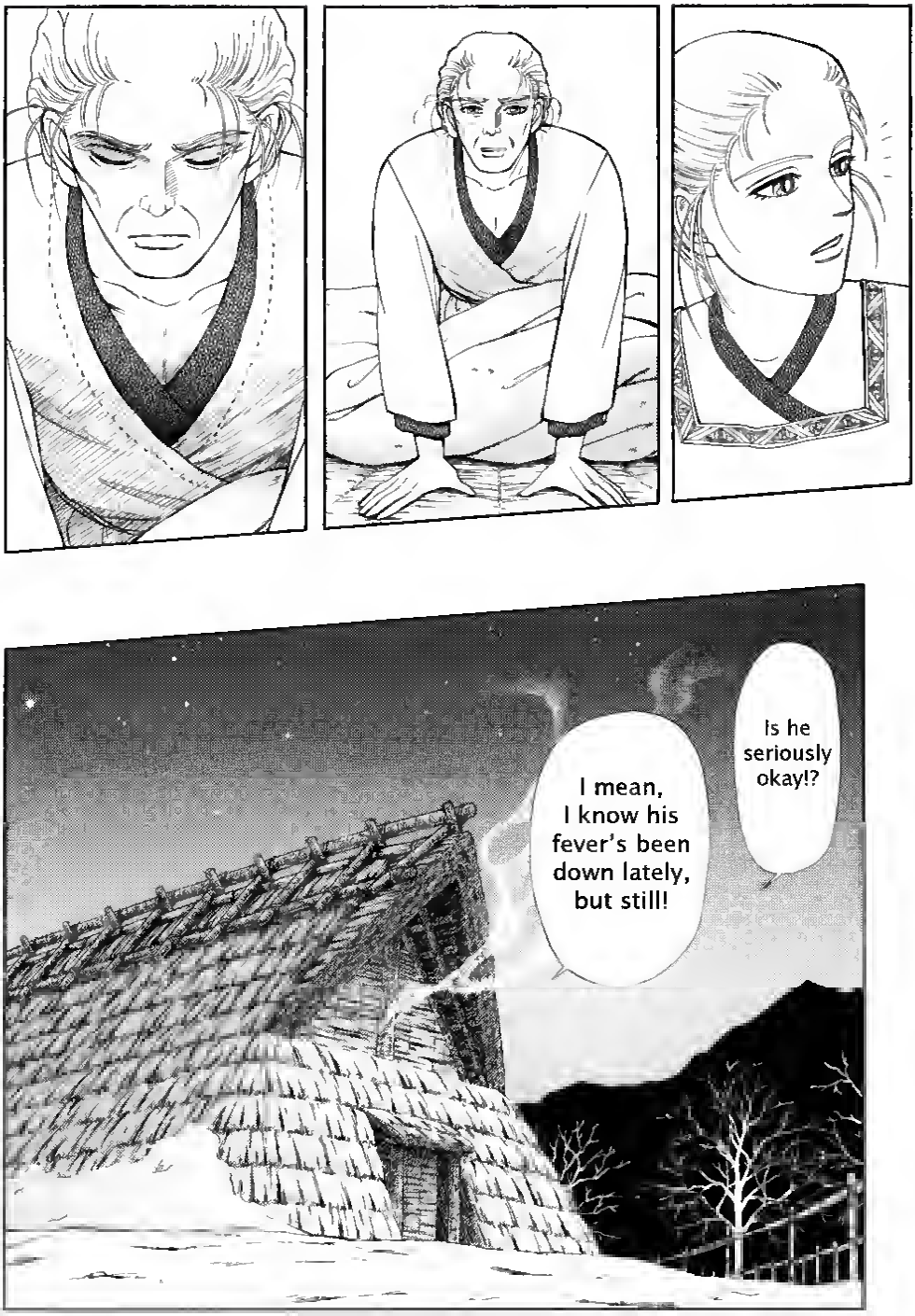
WHISPER
ヒソ
ヒソ
ヒソ
WHISPER
What's with them?
Is it contagious?
How scary...
Is she will?
The girl's arm was covered in scales!?
Ew!
WHISPER
WHISPER
My ears are animal-sharp!
It's creepy ...
We should tell the village chief.
Her arm...!?
Did they spread from her shoulder...?

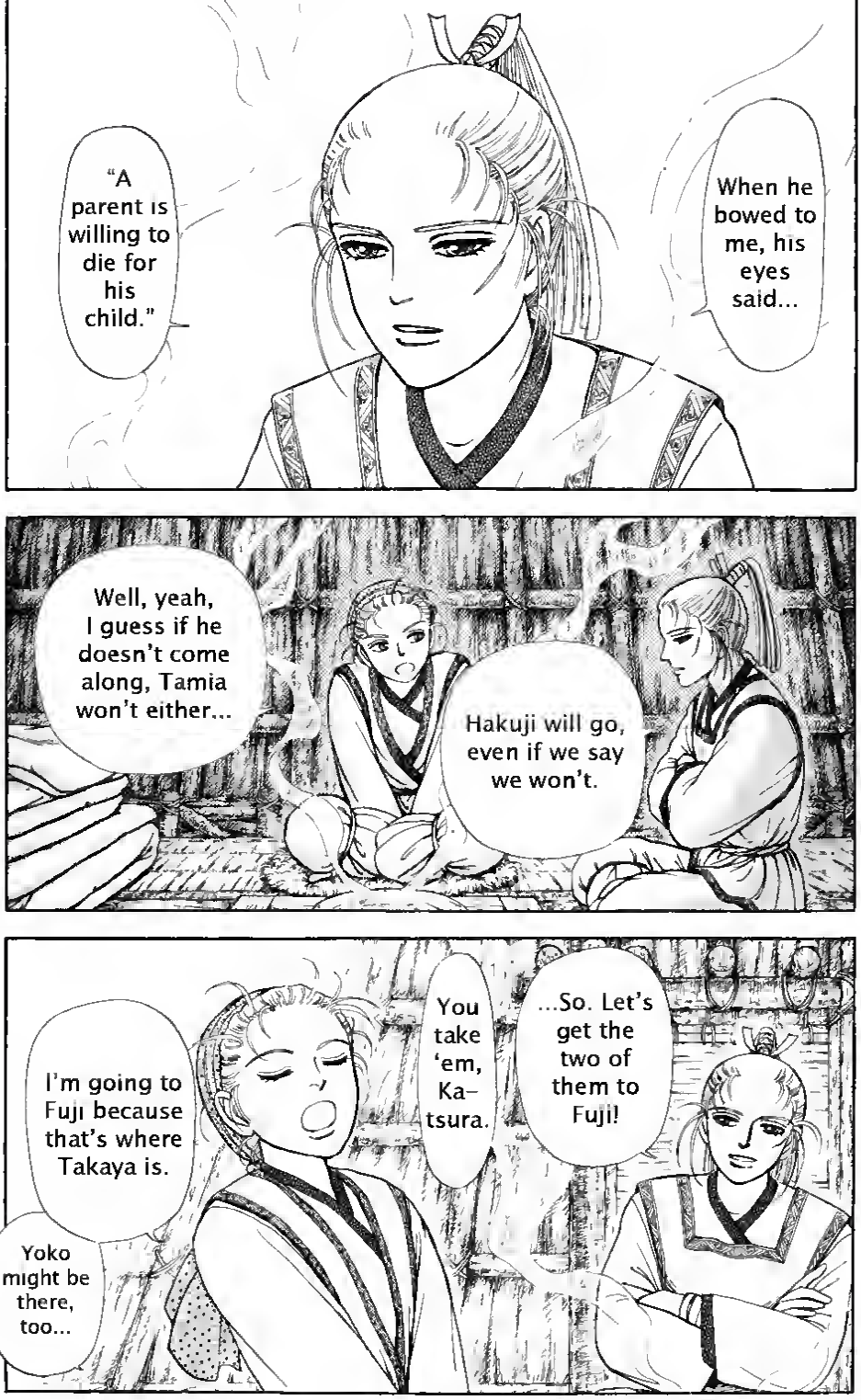

Wh-what's wrong? Why the scowl?
Did you catch some fish?
Oh... Oh, Kai.
...are waaaay creepier.
STOMP
Your faces...
STOMP
Here. I'll show you mine.
You people want to see weird stuff, right?
VWIP
SHUNK

Myyy!
My!
My.
Oh!
It looks like red flames...

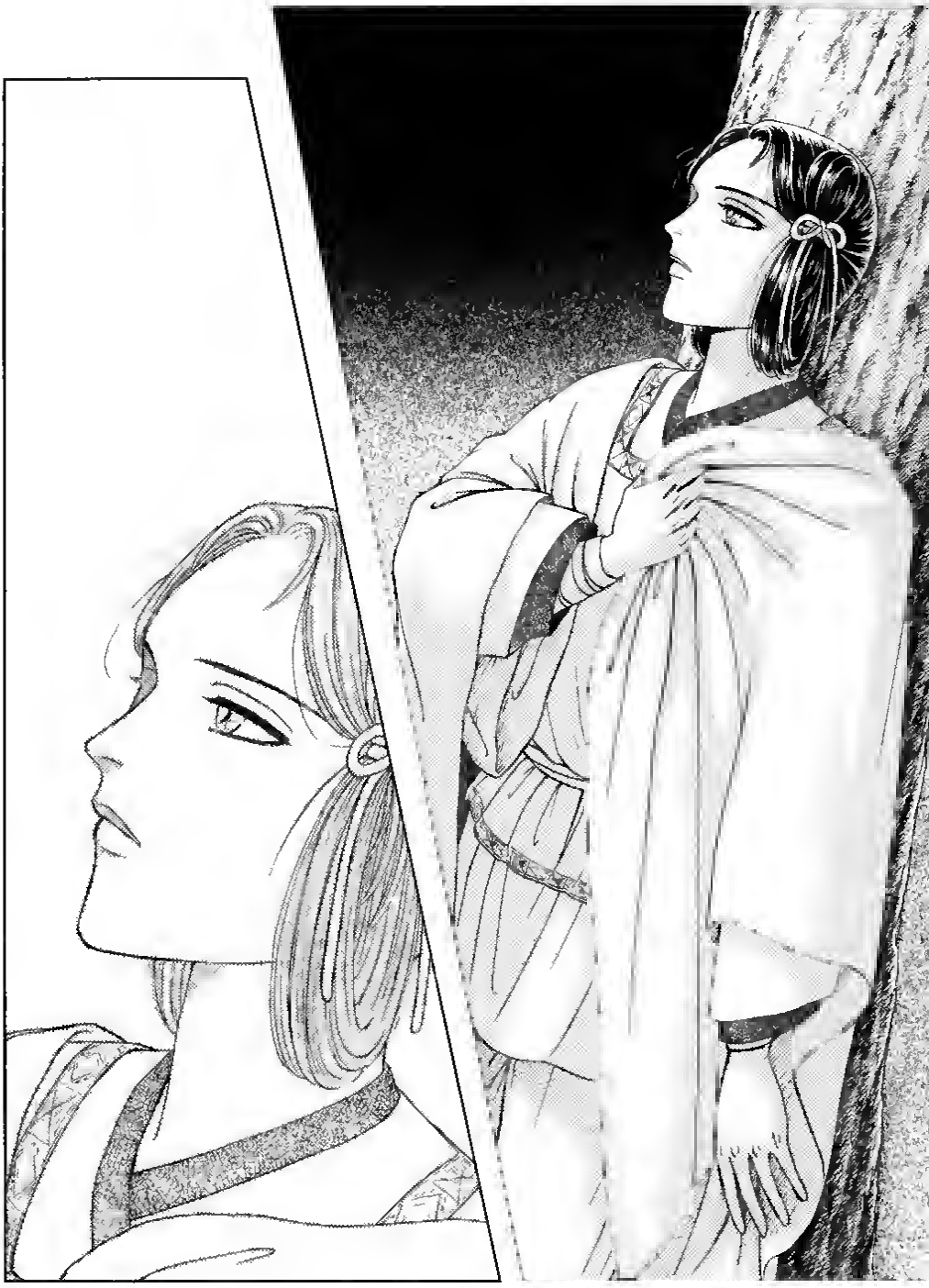

I told you your mane was pretty, didn't I!?
Stand tall, Kai!
Yes, it is...
How ... pretty!
For real?
Huh?
Huh!?
Huh?
Can I?
Can I touch it?
Hmph!
How d'ya like that!?

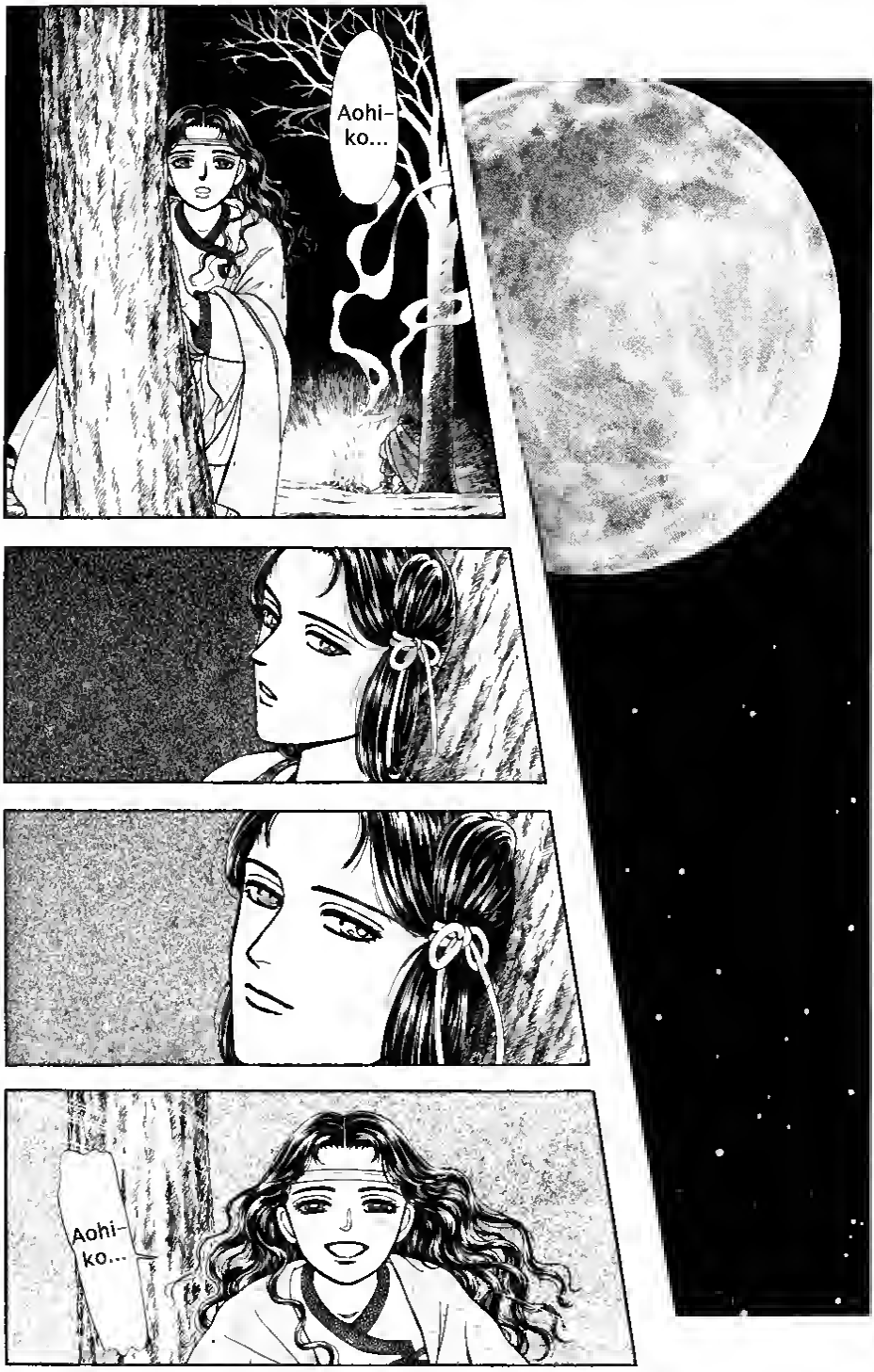
NUZZLE
NUZZLE
Ooh, it's so soft and warm!
Let me see!
It's so pretty! It shines in the morning sun.
Quit pawing me!
Let me touch, too!
Kai? Say,
Does it go all the way to your heinie?
Hey! No! Don't touch that...
For...
For me!?
They're all fussing over Kai.
He's showing off his mane.


Is he seriously okay!?
I mean, I know his fever's been down lately, but still!

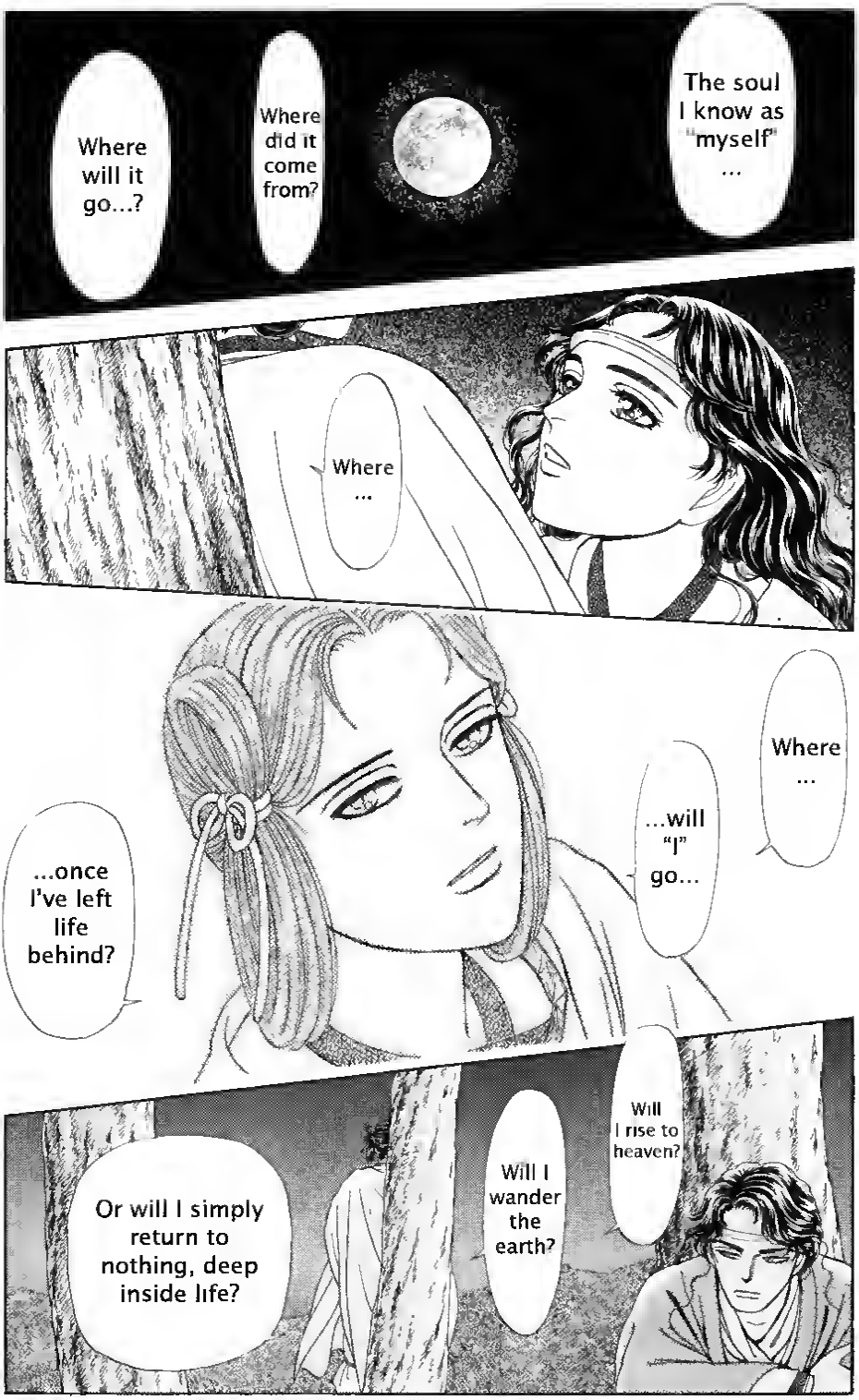

"A parent is willing to die for his child."
When he bowed to me, his eyes said...
Well, yeah, I guess if he doesn't come along, Tamia won't either...
Hakuji will go, even if we say we won't.
I'm going to Fuji because that's where Takaya is.
Yoko might be there, too...
You take 'em, Ka-tsura.
...So. Let's get the two of them to Fuji!

KEH KEH KEH
Man, I'm getting all kinds of compli-ments today!
You've got the biggest mouth around.
HNGOW!
POW
That wasn't a compli-ment!
I'm gonna get stronger than you, Katsura! Just wait!
Arr rrgh!
Gnaaargh!
Do it if you can! I'll be looking forward to it.



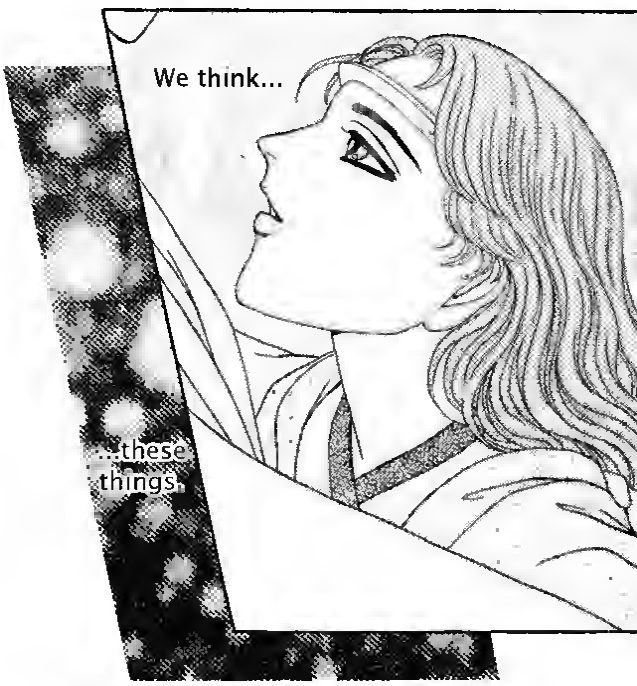

Aohi-
ko...
Aohi-
ko...

It looked like the moon might take you far away...
You scared me.
Until the day you reunite with Takaya...
I want to stay here with you...
...exist as life?
Why does life...

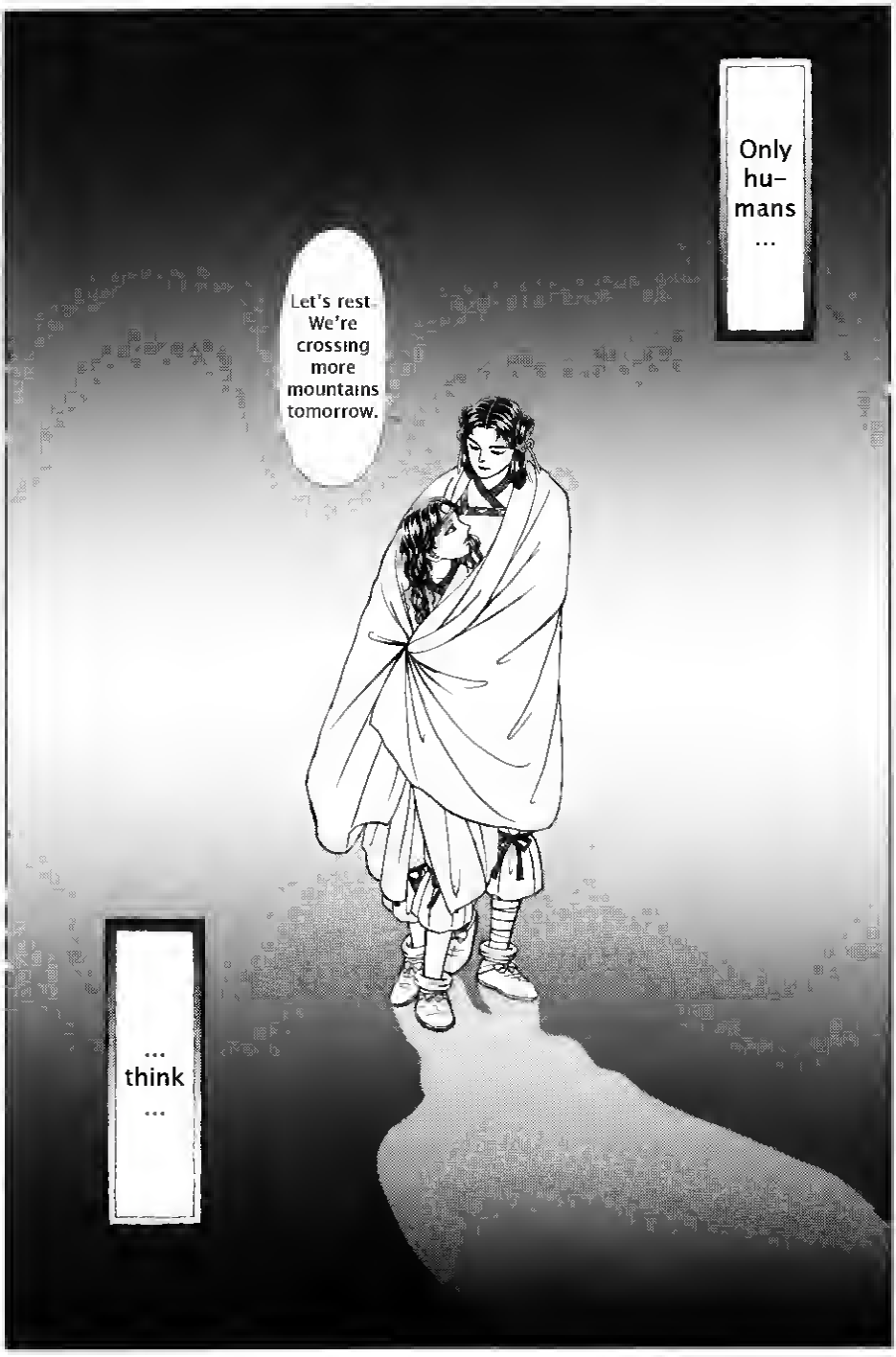

Where will it go...?
Where did it come from?
The soul I know as "myself" ...
Where ...
Where ...
...will "I" go...
...once I've left life behind?
Will I rise to heaven?
Will I wander the earth?
Or will I simply return to nothing, deep inside life?

About "self"...

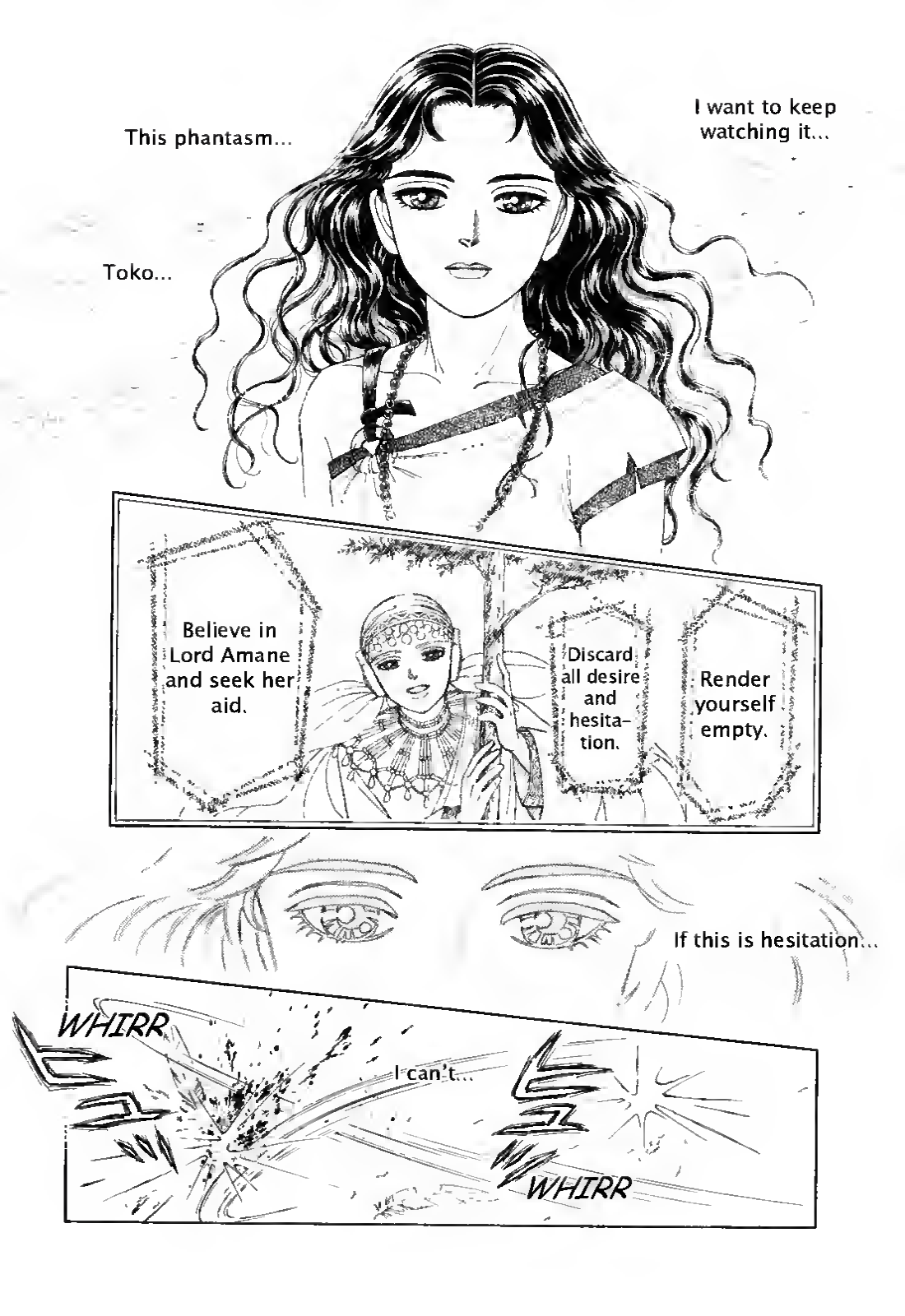
About "life"...



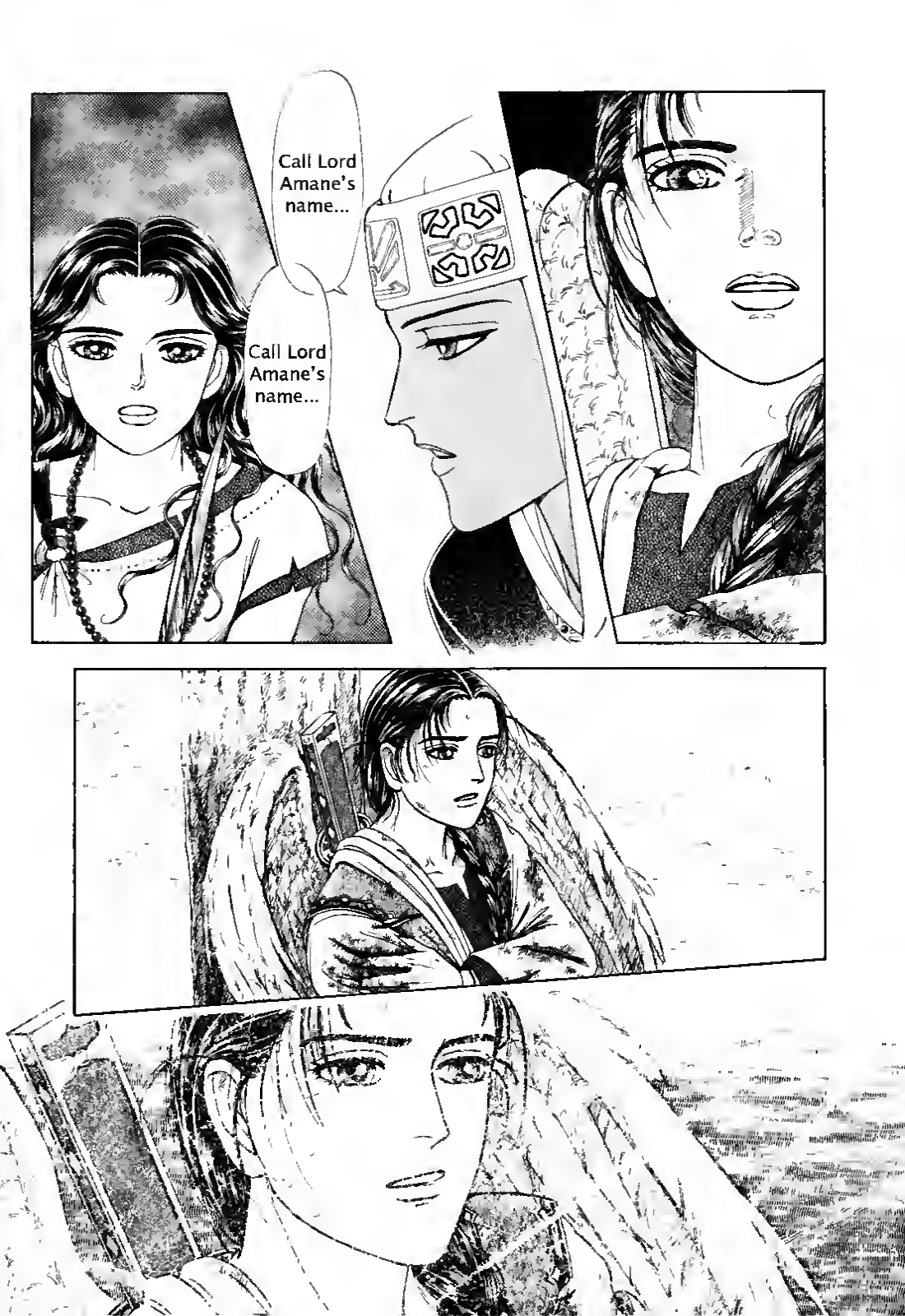
About "death"...

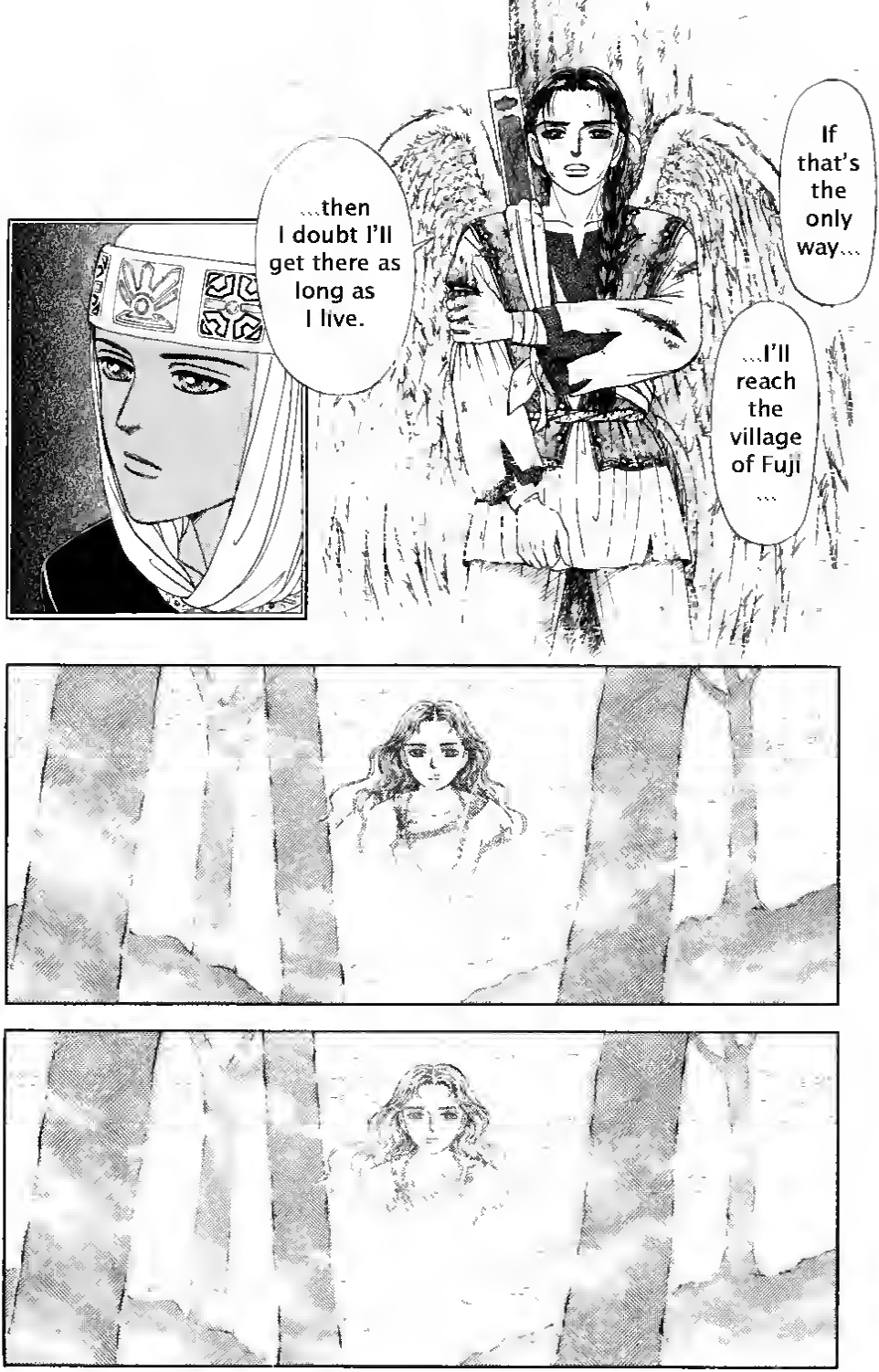

Only hu-mans ...
Let's rest. We're crossing more mountains tomorrow.
... think ...

SNIK
I'm an idiot...
Even after getting cut up thisbadly...


This phantasm...
I want to keep watching it...
Toko...
Believe in Lord Amane and seek her aid.
Discard all desire and hesita-tion.
Render yourself empty.
If this is hesitation...
WHIRR
I can't...
WHIRR

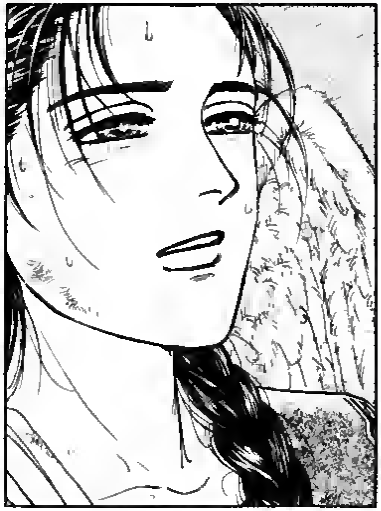
I can't discard it!
Cut me...
Cut me...


Call Lord Amane's name...
Call Lord Amane's name...


If that's the only way...
...I'll reach the village of Fuji ...
...then I doubt I'll get there as long as I live.

It vanished...

HUFF...



Even so, I...
Even so...

RAAAAAAARGH!
CLANG

You're not an illusion!?
Y... you're...
Then ...
Y... you're ...
Those wings!
Th... those ...
A demon god warrior!?
You're Takaya !?

You're pretty torn up, arentcha!
Heh heh heh heh!
What brings you to the forest of illusory mists...?
Why have you come here!?
Did my friends do that to you?
Yeah, right!
Aren't you seeking Amane's aid?
I'll finish you off!
Heh heh heh!
I thought you'd be a monster, but you're just a skinny kid.

Them and their warriors.
All the demon gods are approaching Fuji right now.
...
This place will be crawling with us soon.
Heh heh heh
Turn back!
The forest of illusory mists shouldn't take your life.
You should be able to do it if you try.

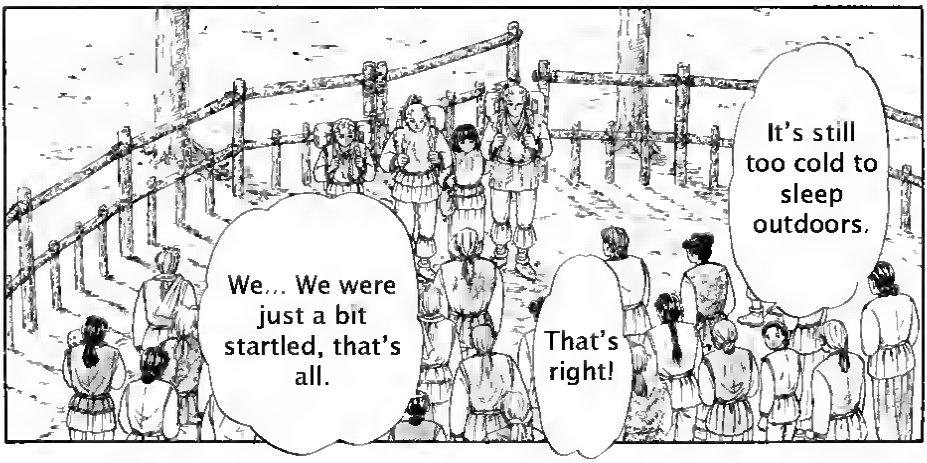
Shaddup!
DASH
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
SKASH

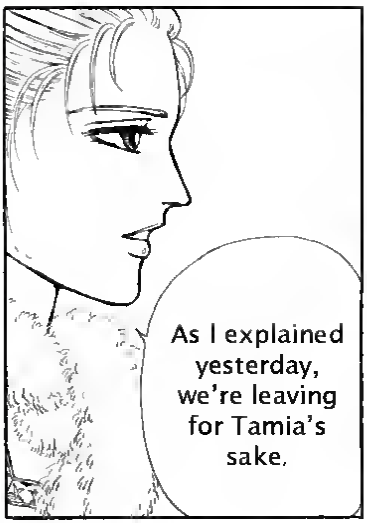
THUD
Even so...
I have to reach the village of Fuji.
That's why Risson gave me his divine name....

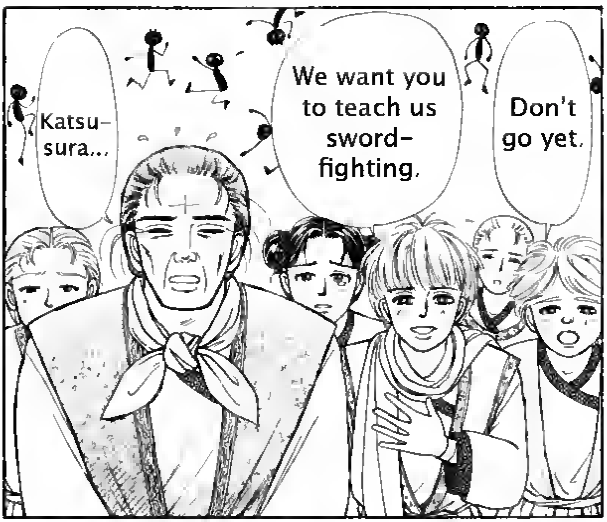
This ...
...is what you wanted ...
...isn't it?

I ask...
I will continue to ask.
As long as I have this vessel ...

You're there, are you not!?
Gods that cannot be seen!


It's still too cold to sleep outdoors.
We... We were just a bit startled, that's all.
That's right!


As I explained yesterday, we're leaving for Tamia's sake.


Katsu-sura...
We want you to teach us sword-fighting.
Don't go yet.

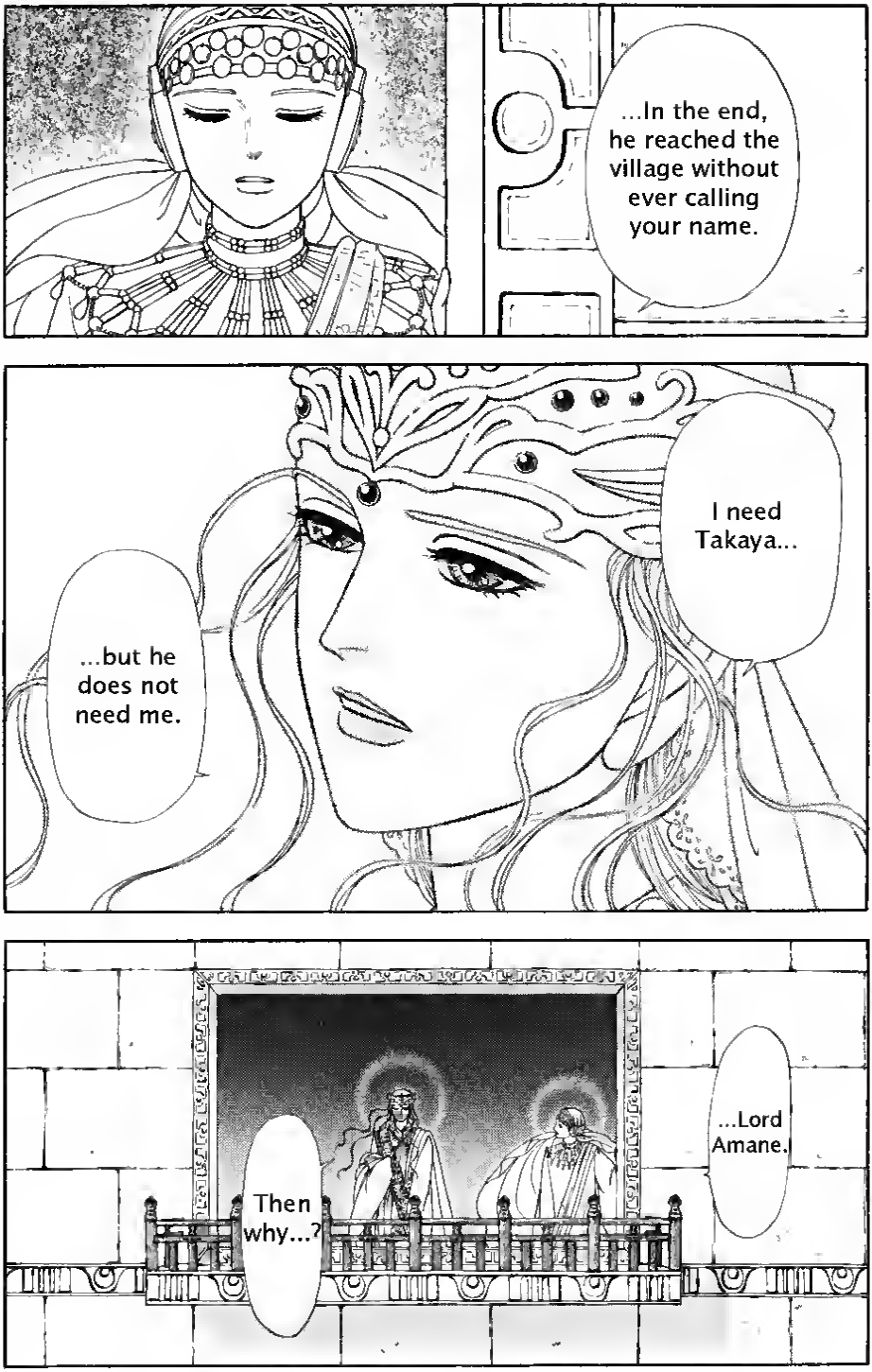
Well, you're always welcome here.
So sleepy
I see ...
Please don't worry. That makes it harder for us.
Thanks!
Hey, Kai! Bow, already!
Thank you for everything.
Katsura! Say hi to Takaya for us when you see him.
Tamia! Take care of yourself!
Haku-ji!
Get stronger, Kai!
Be careful.

It's your characters.
They're actually kinda...
I sort of thought I didn't like that village, but...
BLUSH
Kai's a good person.
Kai's character, huh!?
BWA HA HA HA
Characters!
Keh!
I'm fine with being a hopeless case!
I... I'm ...
You are.
Cut that out.

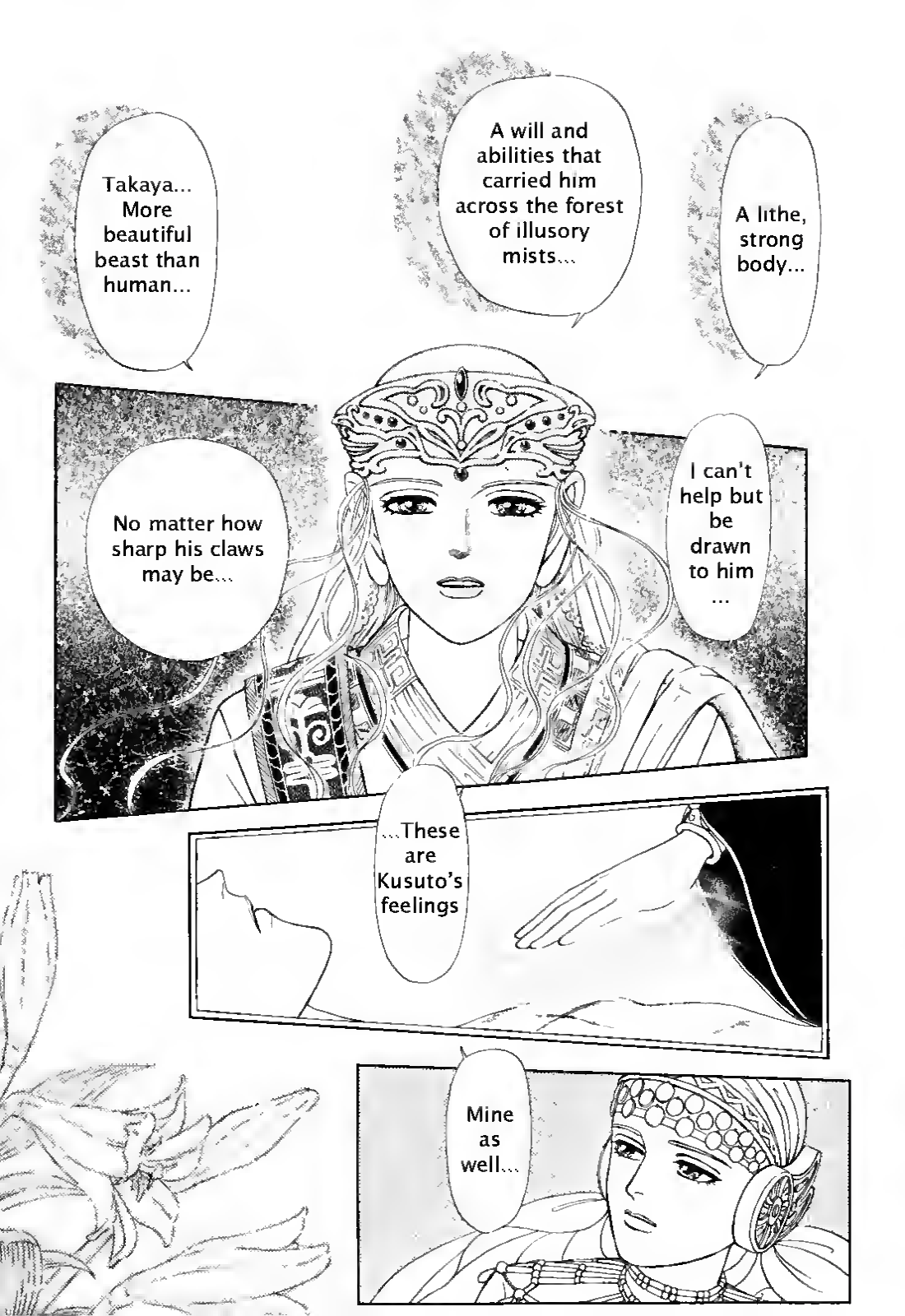
Takaya told me if I turn into a good kid...
...he'll leave me behind.
Don't you worry. You're a horrible brat.
That sounds like Taka-ya.
You're a lousy brat!
I'm not a brat!

Oh! Lady Sarai!
Could he be...
Wi... wings!
...
Have him carried to the temple.
Is this man Takaya?
He is, isn't he?
Lady Sarai ...

What hapened!?
The poor thing ...
He's badly hurt...
Still, this is wonderful, Lady Sarai.
...I'm sure he will.
I'll go tell everyone.
Once his wounds are healed, Takaya is sure to protect this village from the demon gods.


...In the end, he reached the village without ever calling your name.
I need Takaya...
...but he does not need me.
...Lord Amane.
Then why...?

To the point of breaking his spirit and his strength...
Why did Takaya work so hard to come to me?
Risson?
Risson, who left Fuji?
Risson must have ordered him to protect this place.
Takaya once served Risson.
Takaya will not fail to serve you as guardian of the village of Fuji, Lord Amane.
Your fears are unfounded.


Takaya... More beautiful beast than human...
A will and abilities that carried him across the forest of illusory mists...
A lithe, strong body...
No matter how sharp his claws may be...
I can't help but be drawn to him ...
...These are Kusuto's feelings
Mine as well...

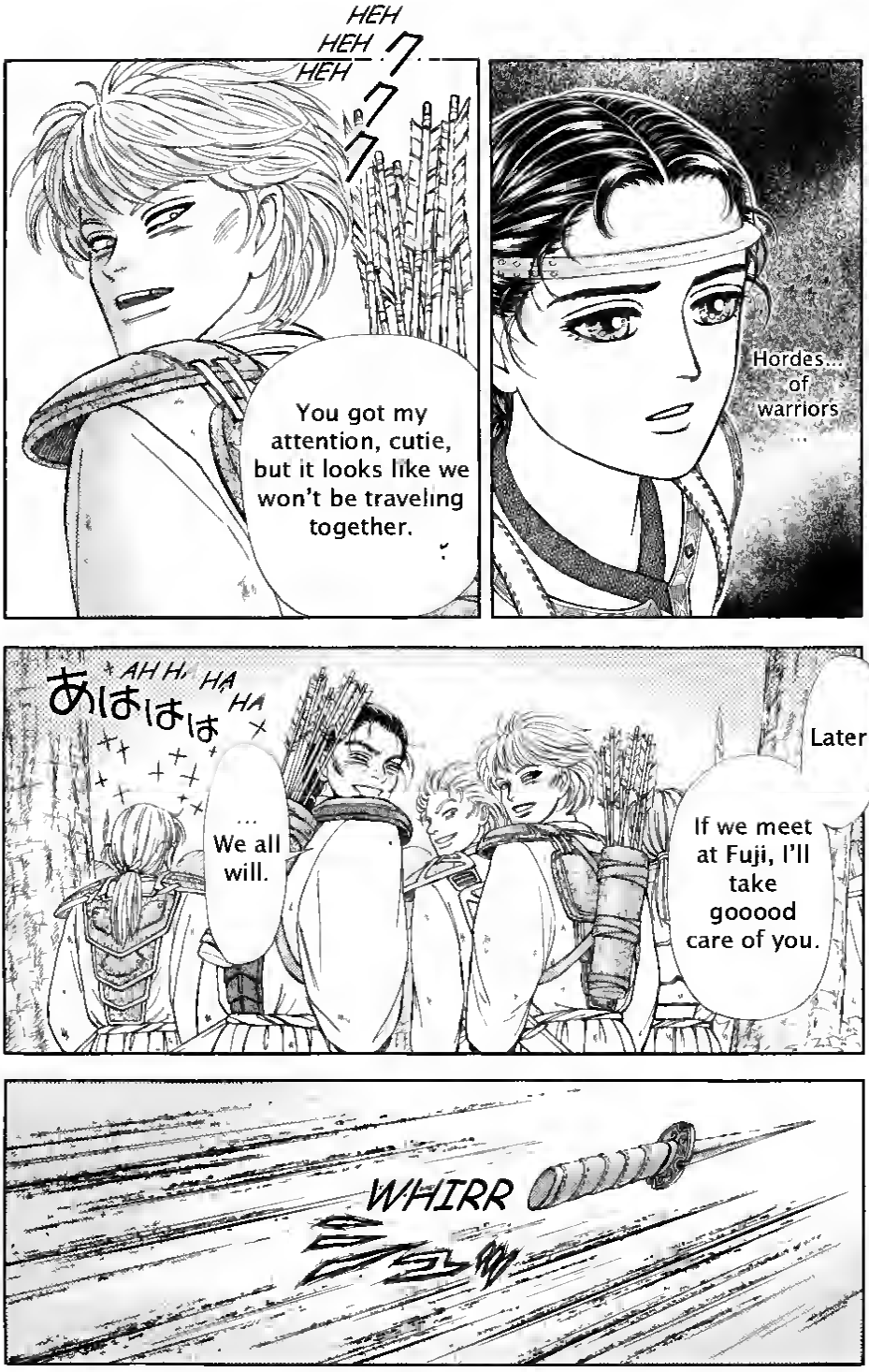
Aohiko! Get down!
WHIRR
WHIRR
TAK
TAK
Whoa !?

HEH
HEH
HEH
HEH
Hey, what gives!?
Do you plan to attack the village of Fuji with those numbers?
Still, there aren't many in your party ...
You're Kiyu's warrior, all right.
A girl so pretty she's liable to get herself kidnapped had a demon headband, so we wondered...

Who are you!?
OOH!
What a sweet lil'voice!
Ask again. Then we'll tell ya.
UHH...
Here, I'll ask.

...Or I could ask.
We're warriors of Juo, God of Malice!
RRGH
We can't sit around while everyone else has all the fun.
We're itching to attack Fuji, anyway.

I told you, we're Lord Juo's warriors!
What!?
Whether you sit around and watch or not is for Lord Kiyu to decide.
There are hordes of demon god warriors headed there.
Besides, we're not the only ones headed for Fuji.
...but even his power can't stop all of us.
I don't know what Lord Kiyu thinks about that...

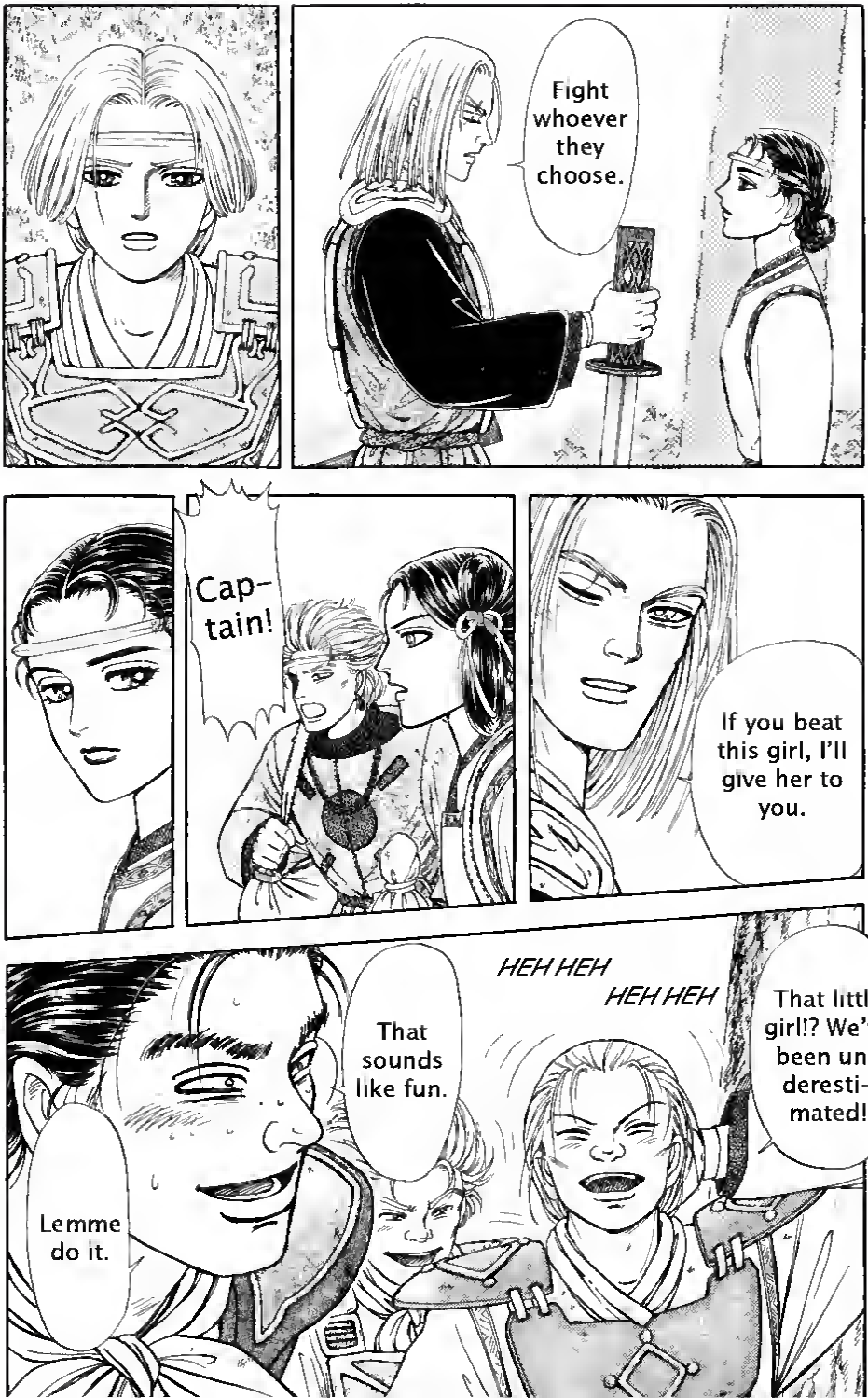

HEH
HEH
HEH
You got my attention, cutie, but it looks like we won't be traveling together.
Hordes... of warriors ...
あはは
AH H. HA HA
... We all will.
Later!
If we meet at Fuji, I'll take gooood care of you.
WHIRR

...we won't be seeing you at Fuji.
Looks like ...
!
THOK
What was that for!?
Wh- why you!
H- hey!
Hibiki!

Right here. Right now.
Come on, come take good care of me.
You look like a girl, dude!
You asked for it!
Both of you, halt!

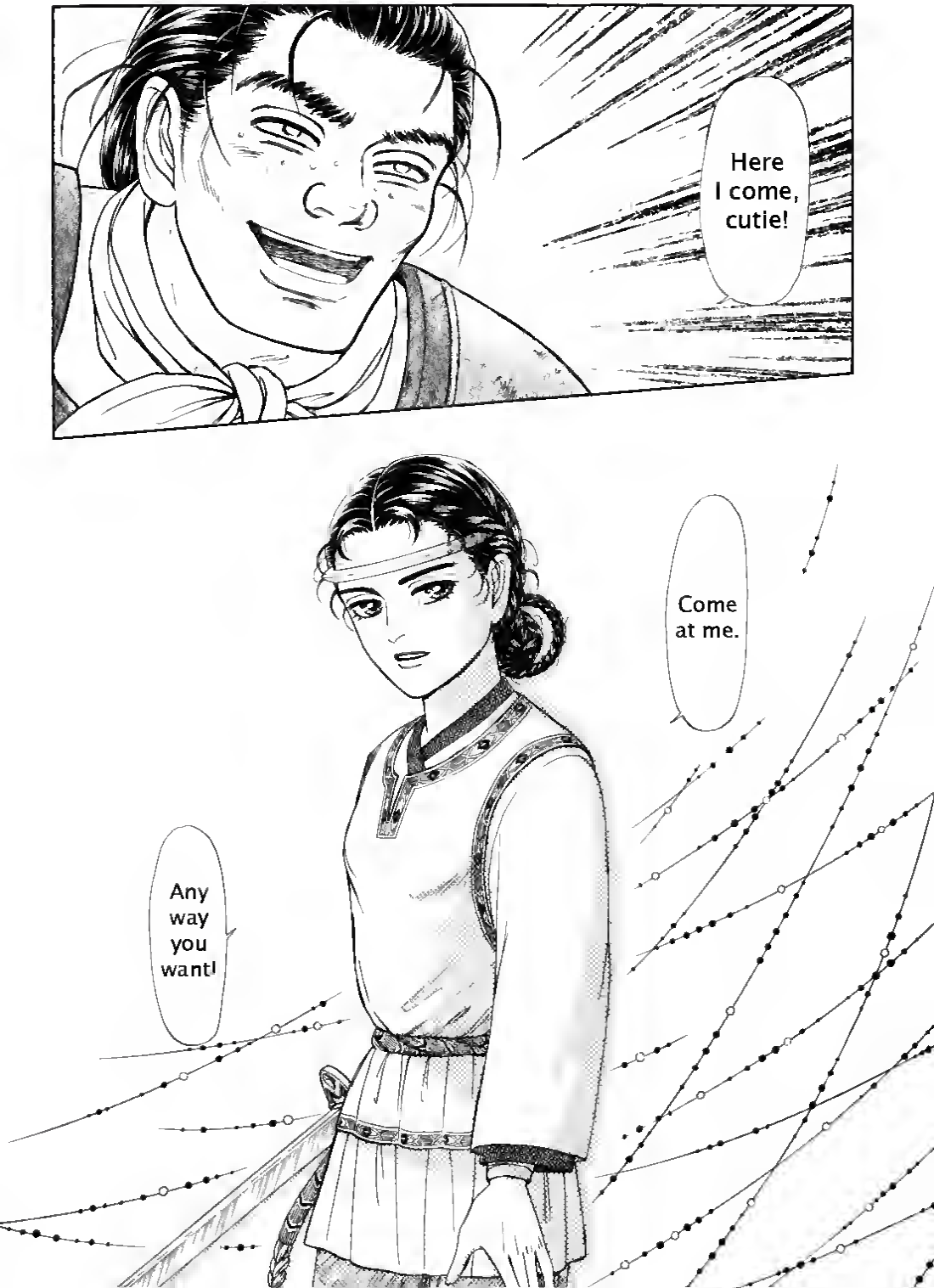
Cap-
tain!
You'd shed each other's blood here and cause trouble for your gods?
You fired your arrows first.
He killed one of us!

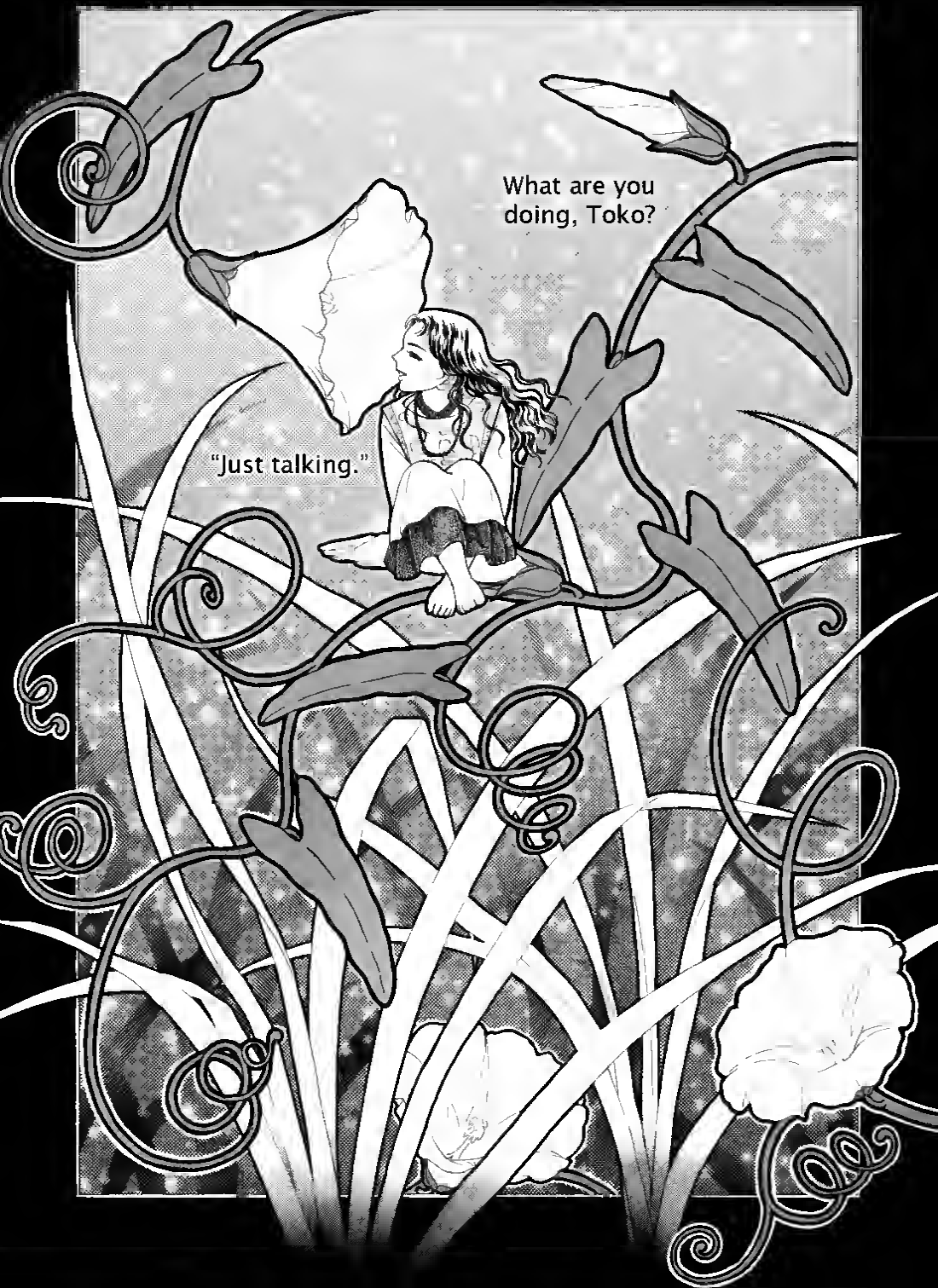
You think we'll just say "Oh, okay" and leave!?
That's all.
The girl blocked the attack. That man didn't.
Whoa!
CLINK
カチッ
Yes sir ...
Yoko!
Put down your pack and come here.


Fight whoever they choose.
Cap-tain!
If you beat this girl, I'll give her to you.
HEH HEH
HEH HEH
That little girl!? We've been un-derest-i-mated!
That sounds like fun.
Lemme do it.

All right !?
It's fine!
Toko ...
Yes sir!
Heh heh heh! Yeah, yeah.
Don't hurt her. That demon headband's real.
YUK YUK YUK
Now that's a tough one!
Forget that. Think of a way to play with her without hurting her.

Don't worry. If it's one-on-one, Yoko's stronger.
Yoko...
SMAK
...touch me!
Do not ...

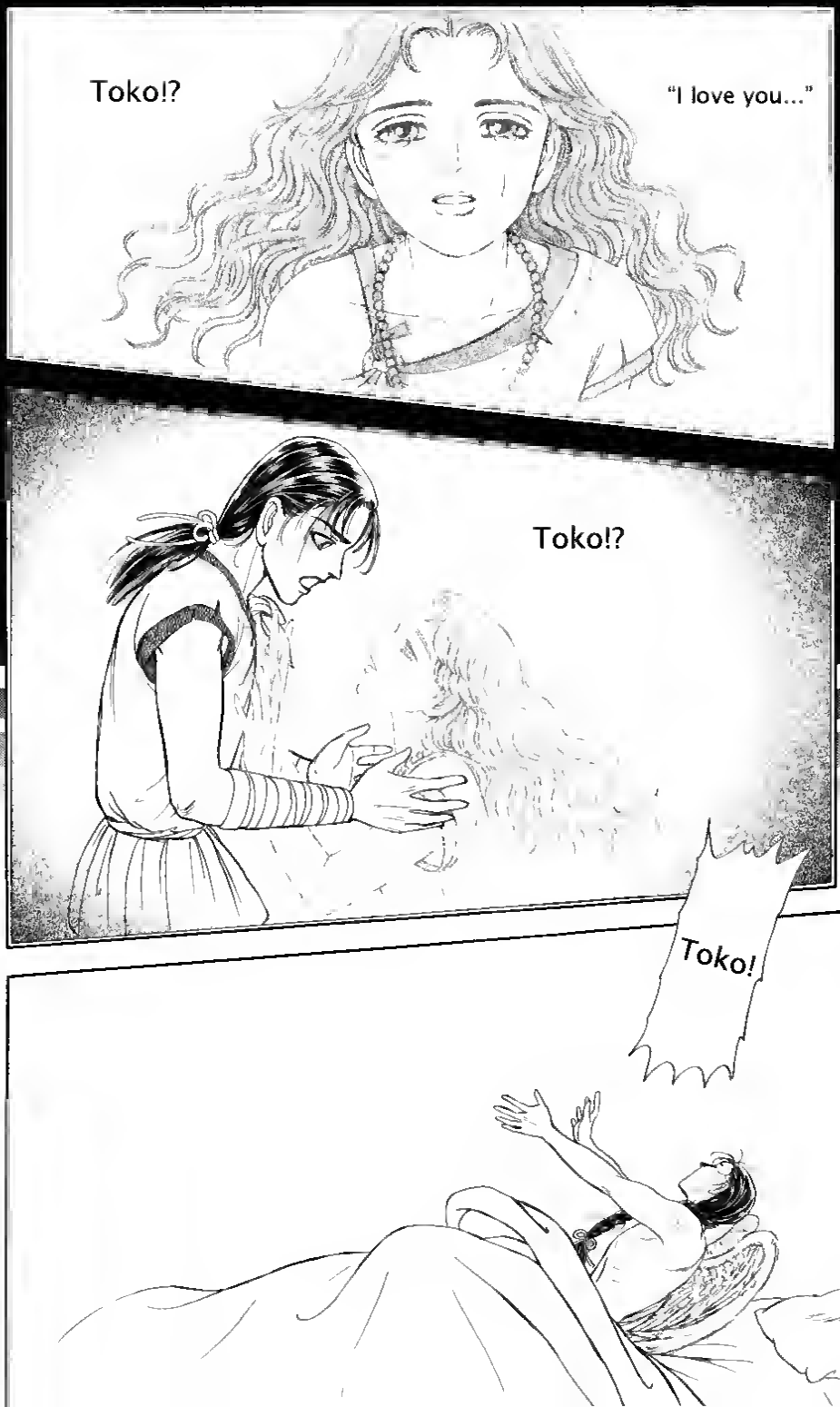

Here I come, cutie!
Come at me.
Any way you want!

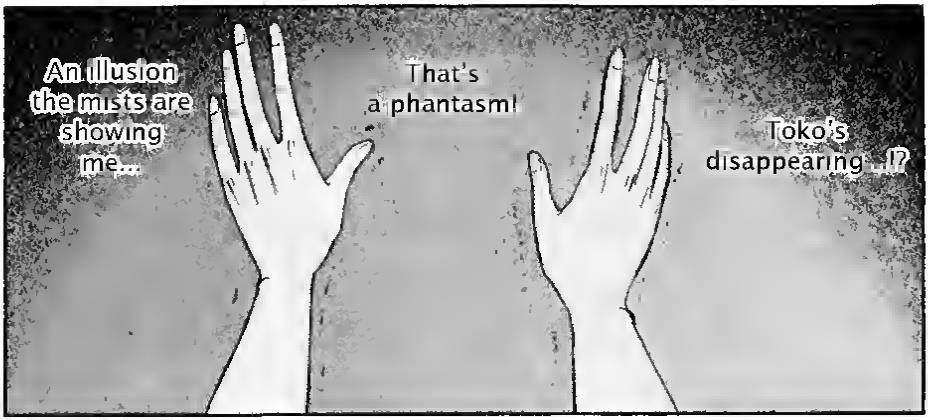

What are you doing, Toko?
"Just talking."

GIGGLE
クスクス
Talking to who? There's nobody there.
"To the flowers..."
"To the grass..."
"I won't get lost."
No, don't. You'll get lost if you go too far from me.
Toko!
"You'll find me for sure, Takaya!"

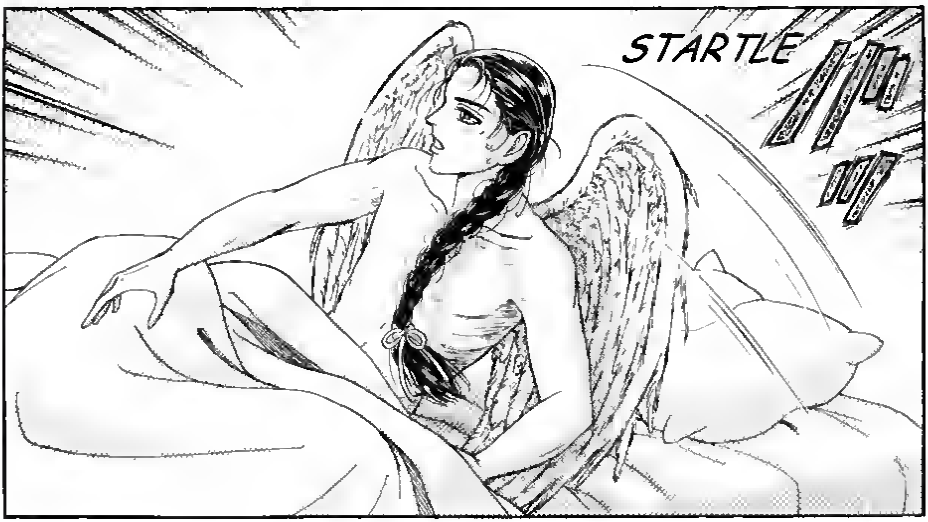
GIGGLE
"Takaya!"
"Takaya!"

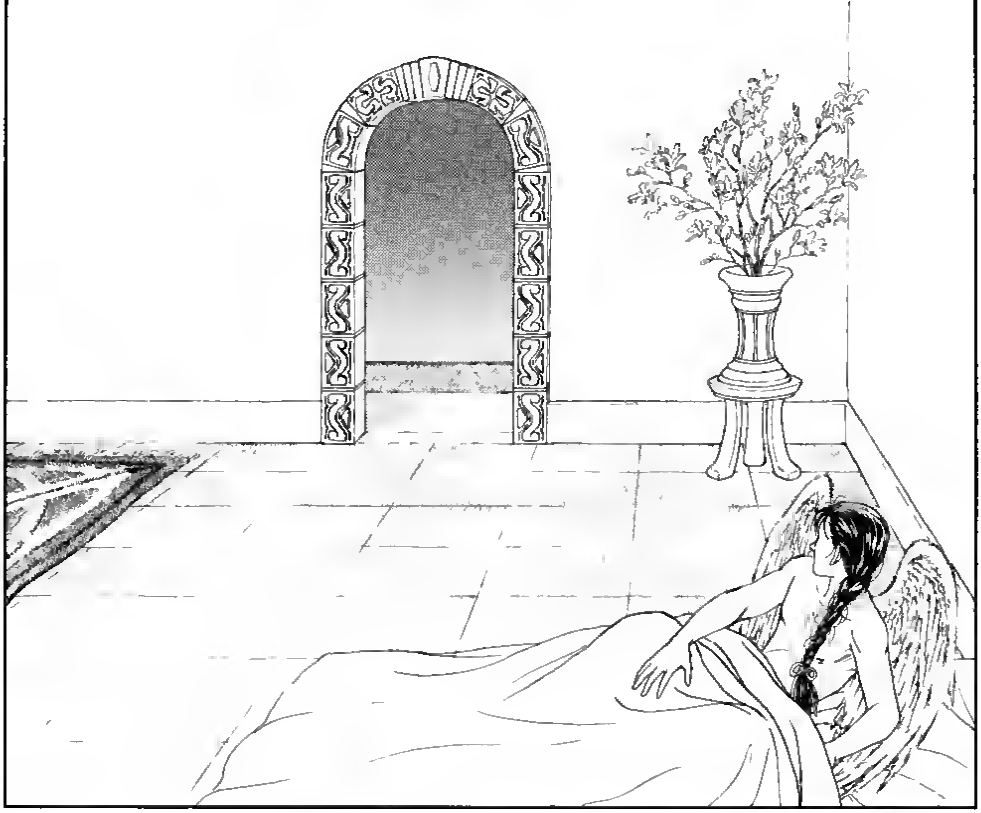
"I love you..."
"...Takaya."


Toko!?
"I love you..."
Toko!?
Toko!

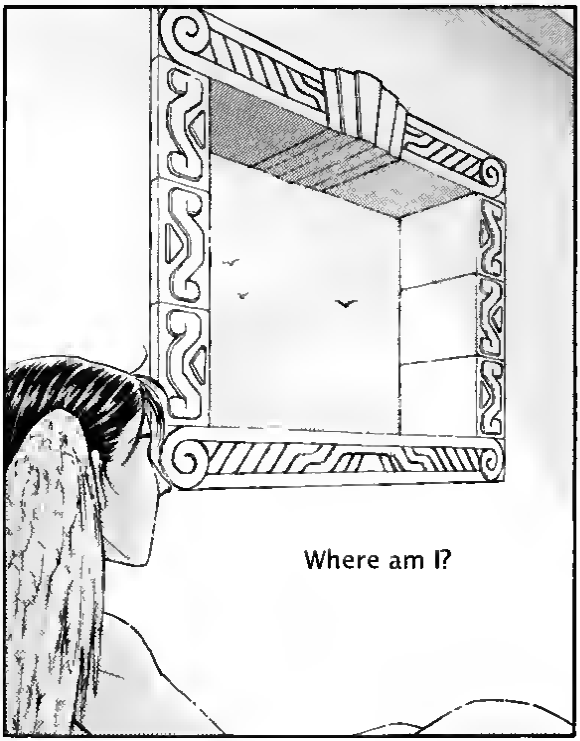

An illusion the mists are showing me...
That's a phantasm!
Toko's disappearing...!?

No... A dream...!?

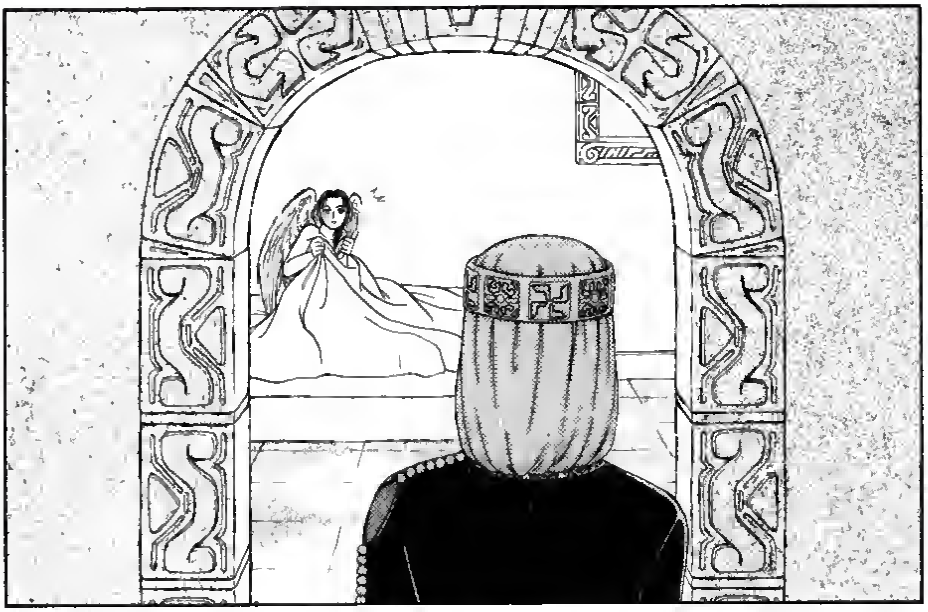

STARTLE

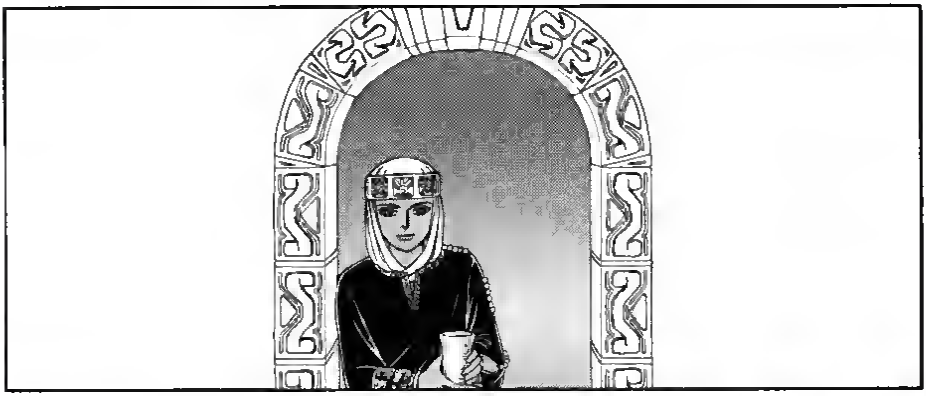


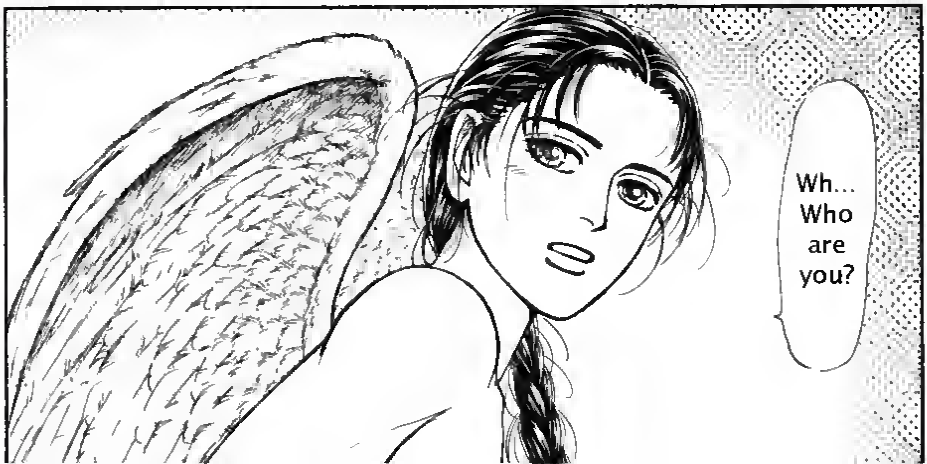
What
a building...

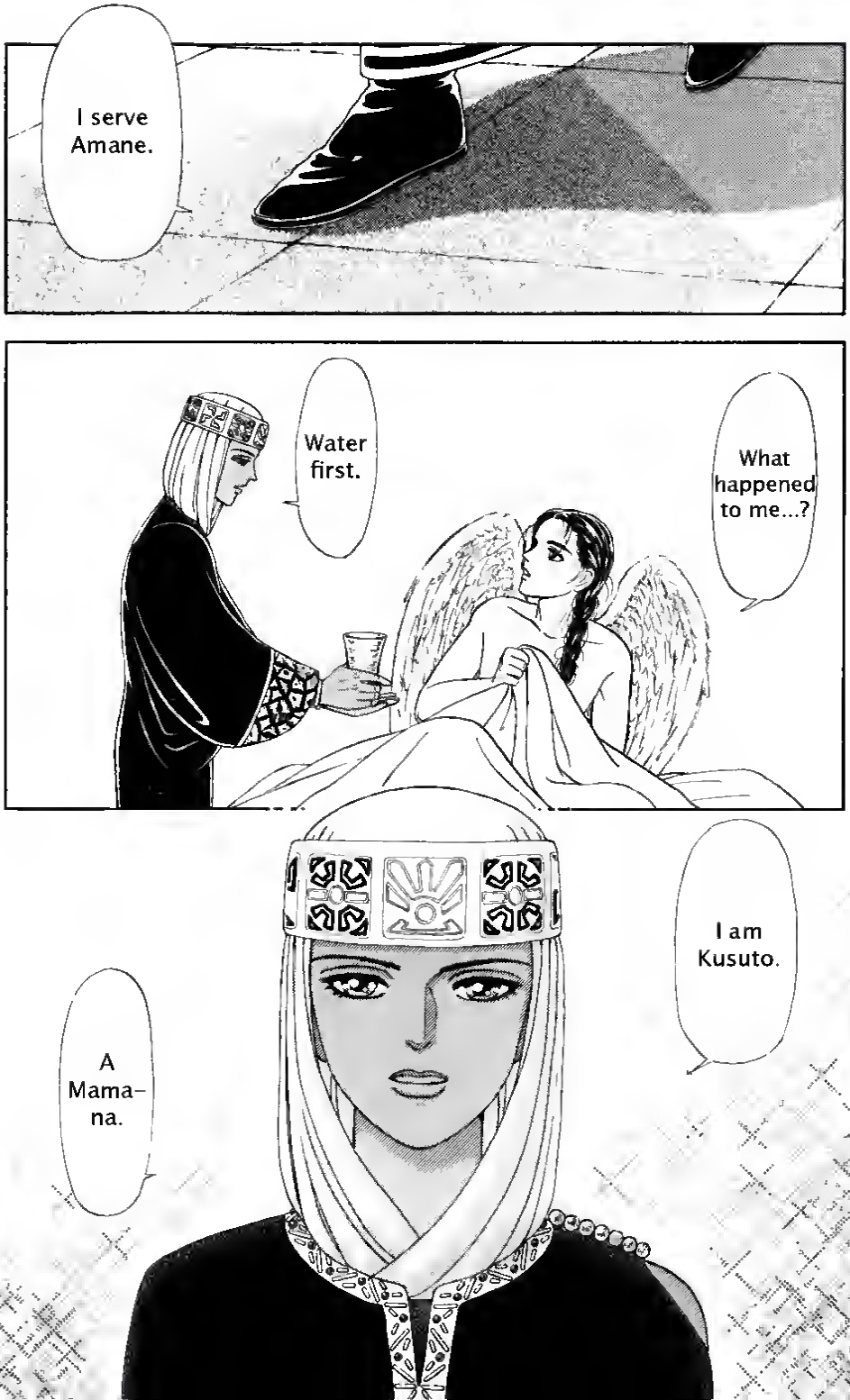

Where am I?

Did I make it to Fuji?
I can see out through that window...
All over...
I've been washed! Really well...



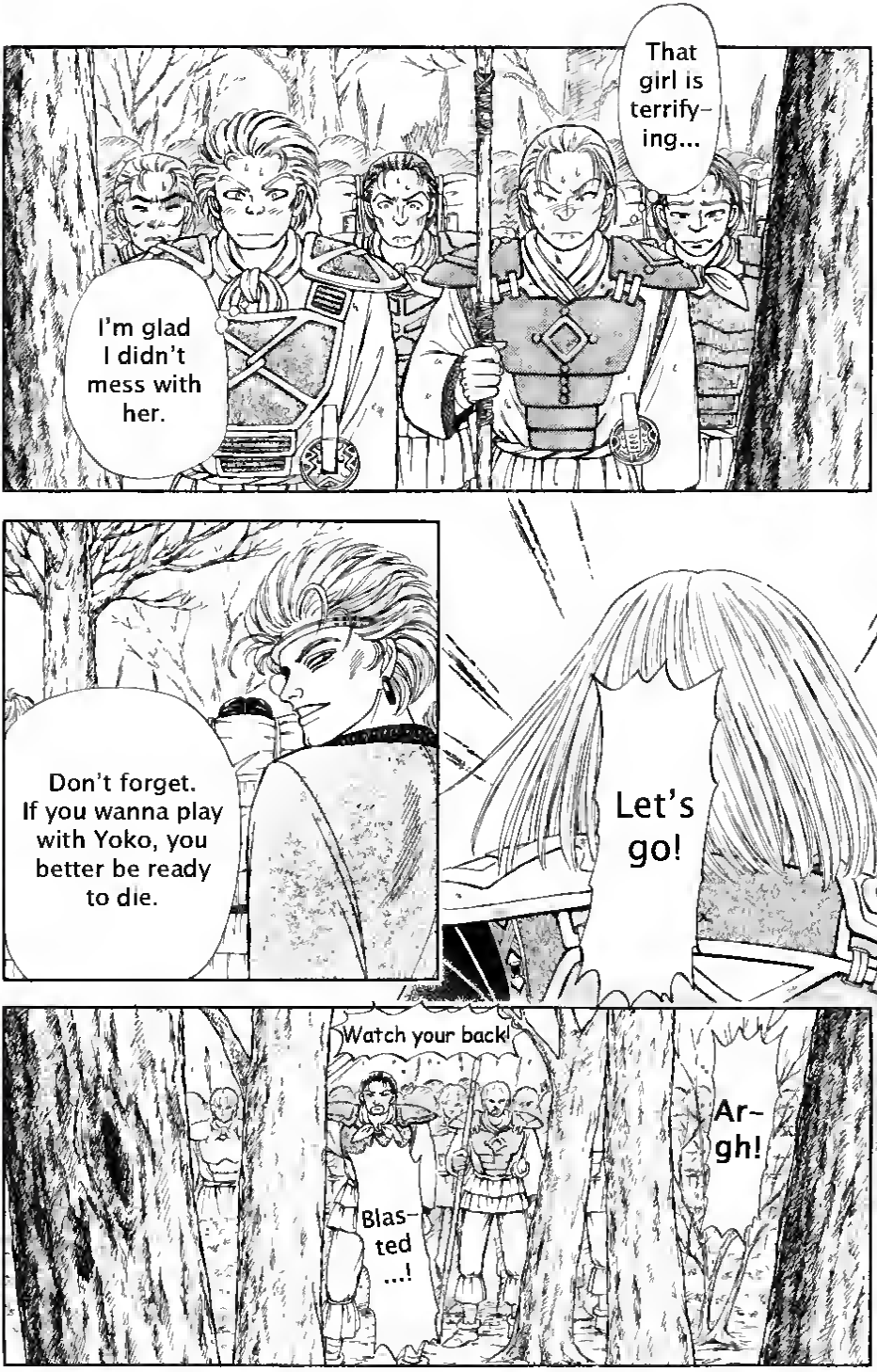


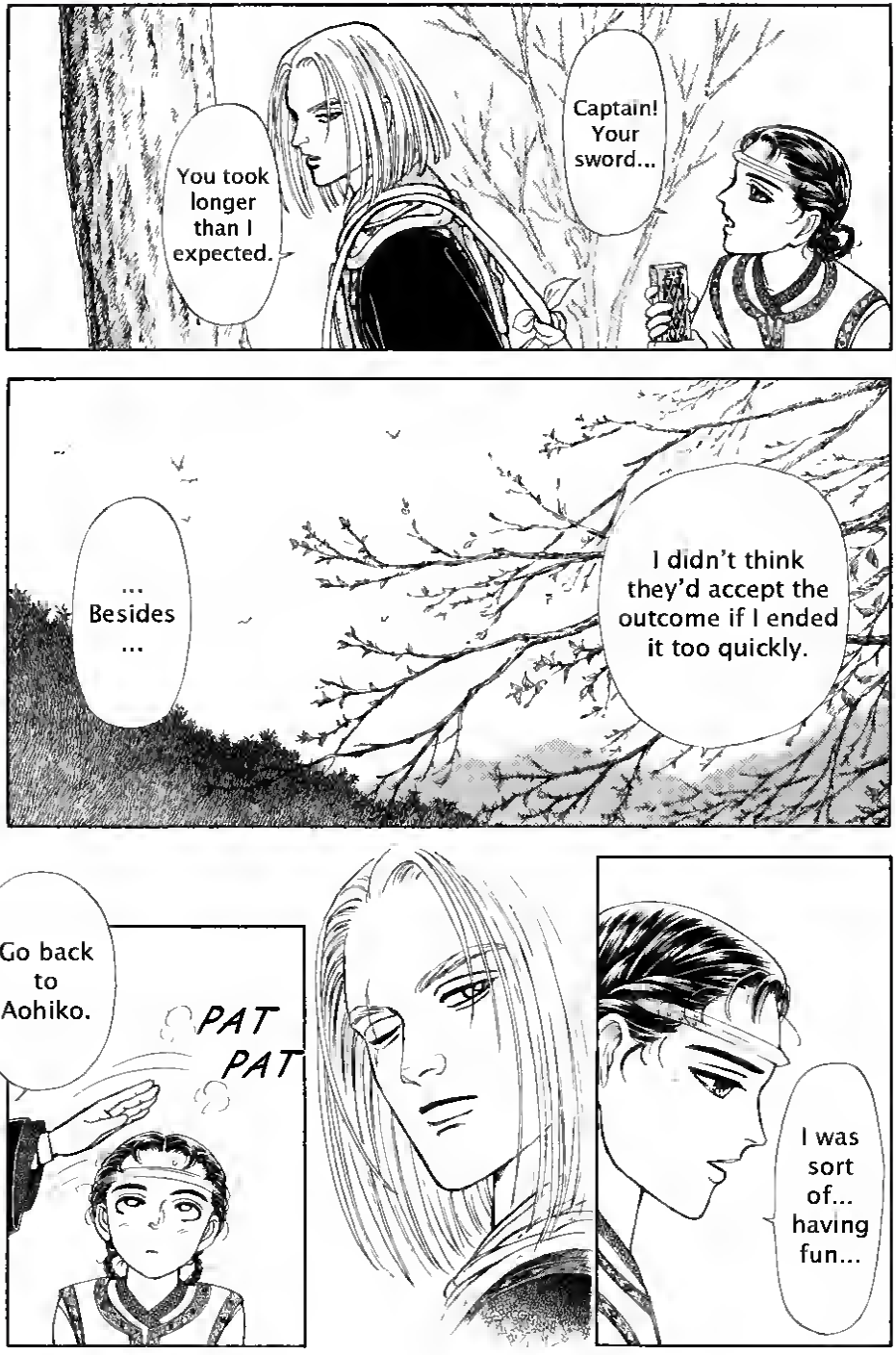

Wh... Who are you?


I serve Amane.
Water first.
What happened to me...?
I am Kusuto.
A Mamana.

Mamana...!
I'll have food pre-pared for you.
What an odd skin tone...
Deep indigo eyes...
What is this person...?
You're so thin...
I've never felt a wavelength like this...

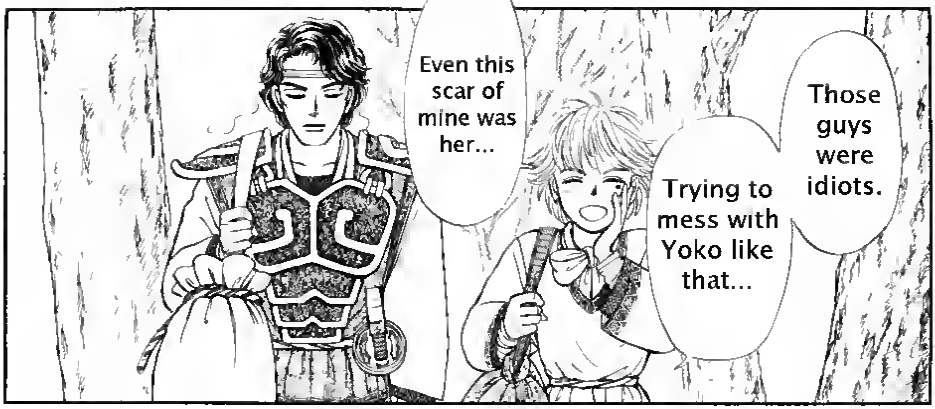
CLANG
WHISH
It's over.
CLANK

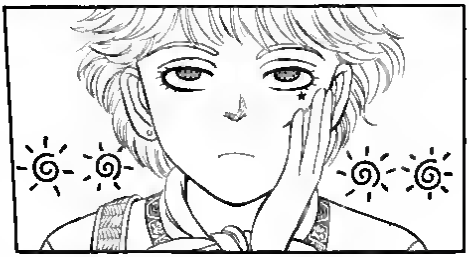

That girl is terrifying...
I'm glad I didn't mess with her.
Don't forget. If you wanna play with Yoko, you better be ready to die.
Let's go!
Watch your back!
Blas-ted ...!
Ar-gh!

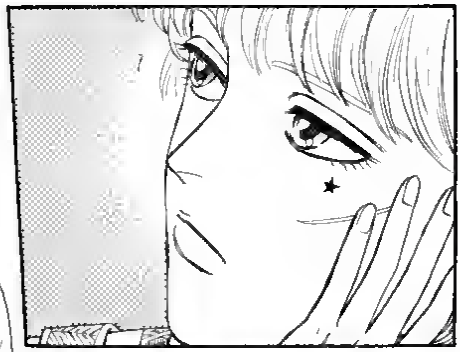

You took longer than I expected.
Captain! Your sword...
... Besides ...
I didn't think they'd accept the outcome if I ended it too quickly.
Go back to Aohiko.
PAT PAT
I was sort of... having fun...

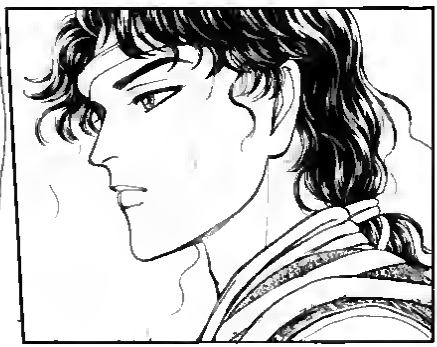
He's not the only one.
When it comes to you, Hibiki gets real worked up.
Aohi-ko!
You had us worried.
HMPH
Should I thank him? ... Probably...
Hibiki
...
The Captain's a real sharp guy.
That was fine leader-ship.
One wrong move, and we'd have fought until one side was annihilated.

He's cold, but he isn't cruel...
He kills without blinking, but he always does it with one blow...
Yoko always wondered why that man became a demon god warrior.
He doesn't have fun torturing people to death, the way the other warriors do.
...
When his face is blank, the captain's way scarier than they are.

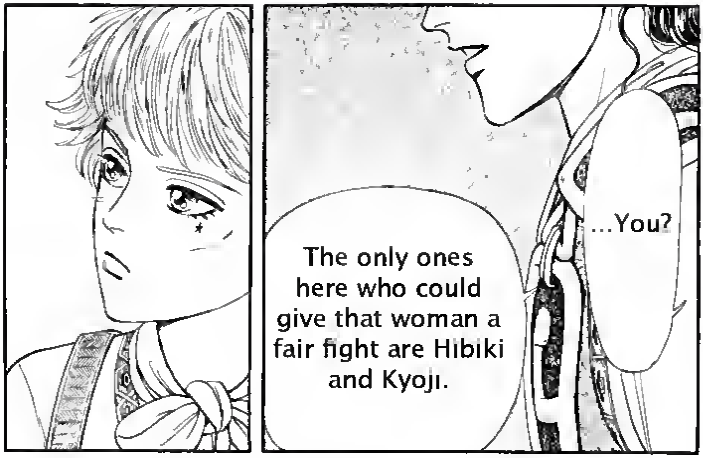

Those guys were idiots.
Trying to mess with Yoko like that...
Even this scar of mine was her...







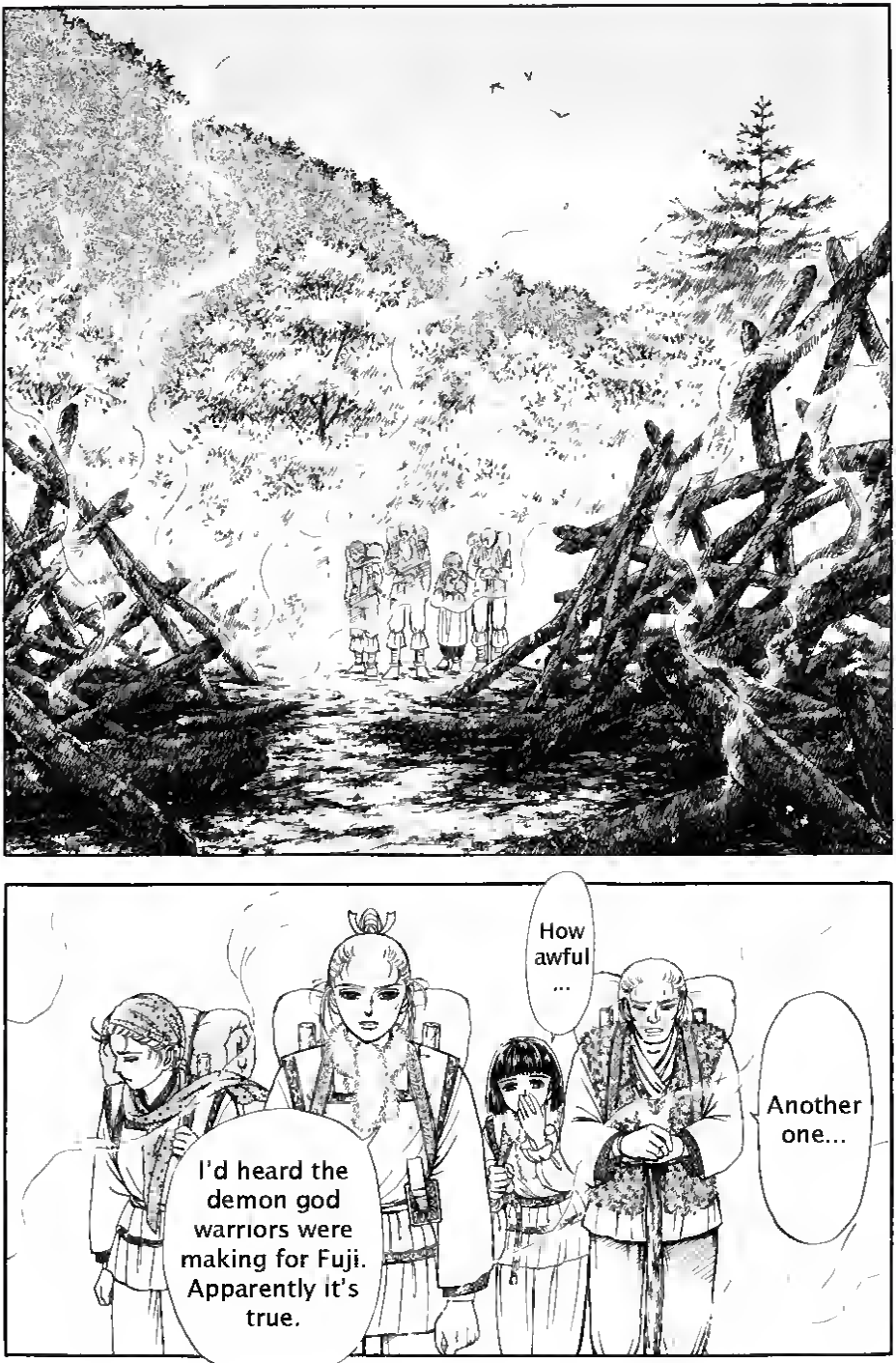
Listen ...
If I meet that Katsura woman, I'll kill her.
Count on it!


...You?
The only ones here who could give that woman a fair fight are Hibiki and Kyoji.

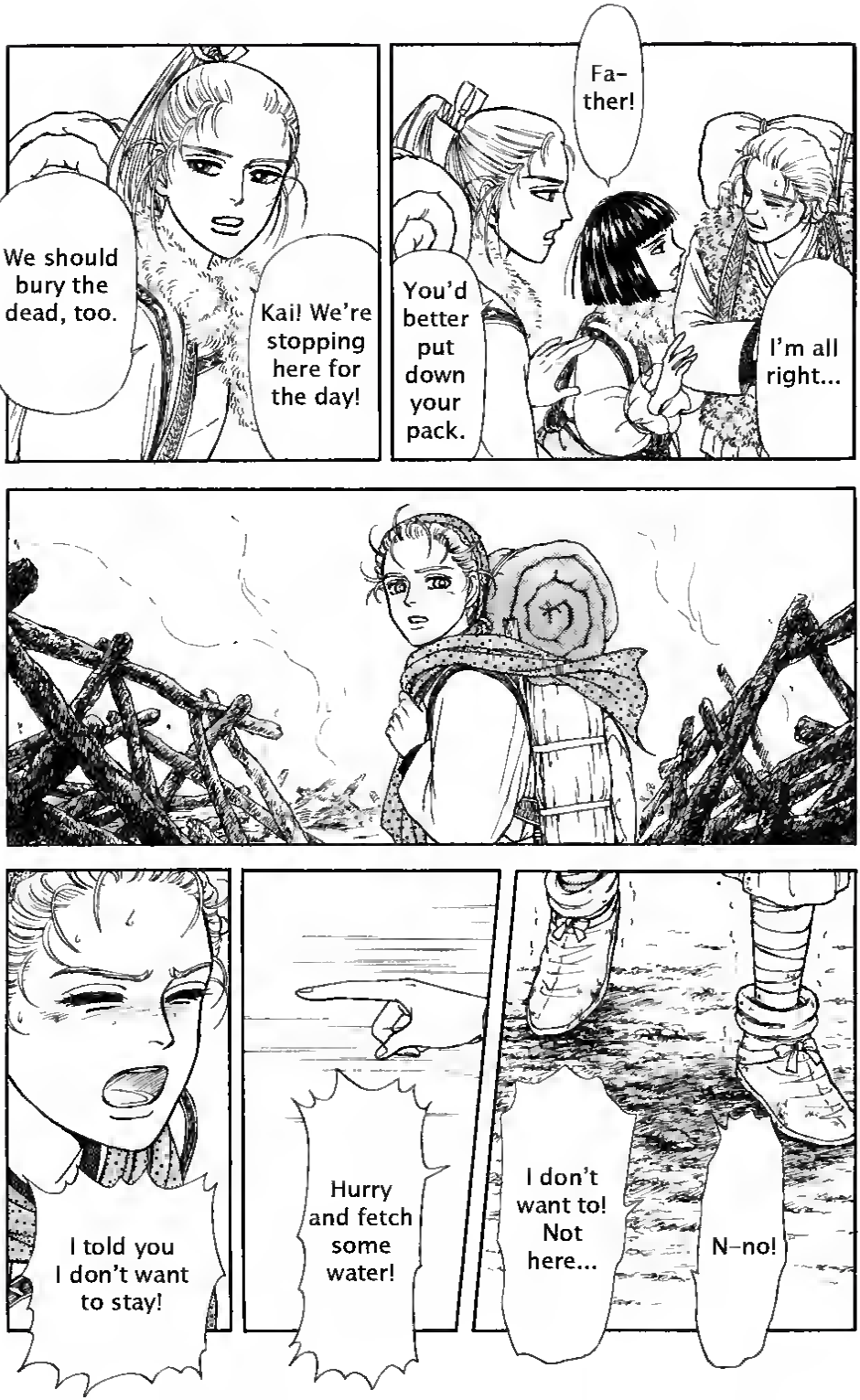
...Mea ning...
You could kill her.
...For sure.

RUSTLE

That's right.

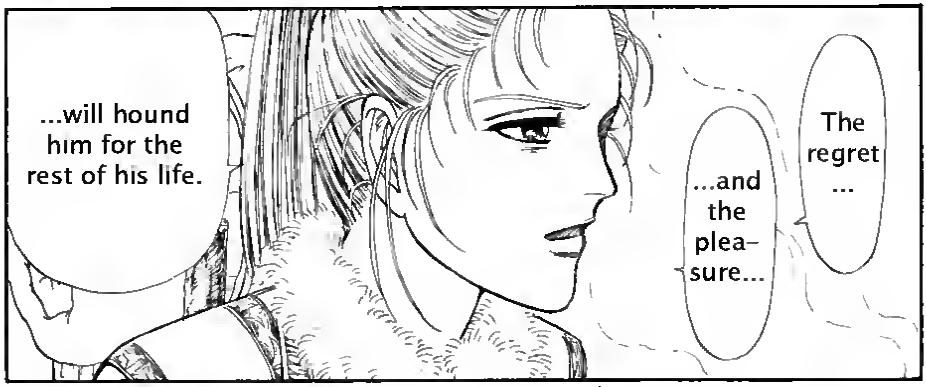

How awful ...
Another one...
I'd heard the demon god warriors were making for Fuji. Apparently it's true.

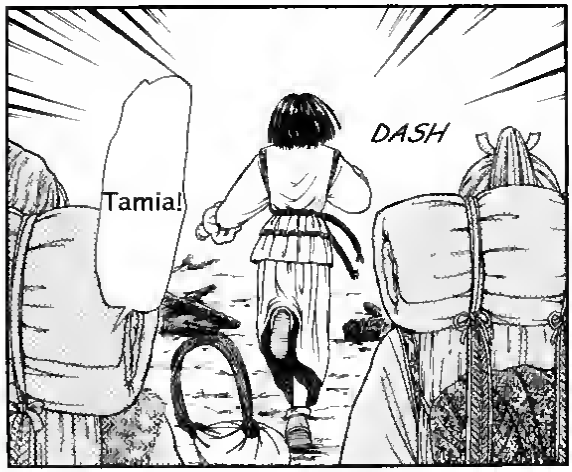
Hurry ...
Let's get through!
DASH
Kai!
Haku-ji!
STAGGER
Father!


We should bury the dead, too.
Kai! We're stopping here for the day!
Fa-ther!
You'd better put down your pack.
I'm all right...
I told you I don't want to stay!
Hurry and fetch some water!
I don't want to! Not here...
N-no!

THUD!
...
Brat.
He was a demon god warrior until just recently.
Kai's been subdued lately...
Ka-tsura... I'm fine...

The demon gods raised him to kill...
...and kill he did.


...will hound him for the rest of his life.
...and the plea-sure...
The regret ...


Tamia!
DASH

He can't run. He has to fight.

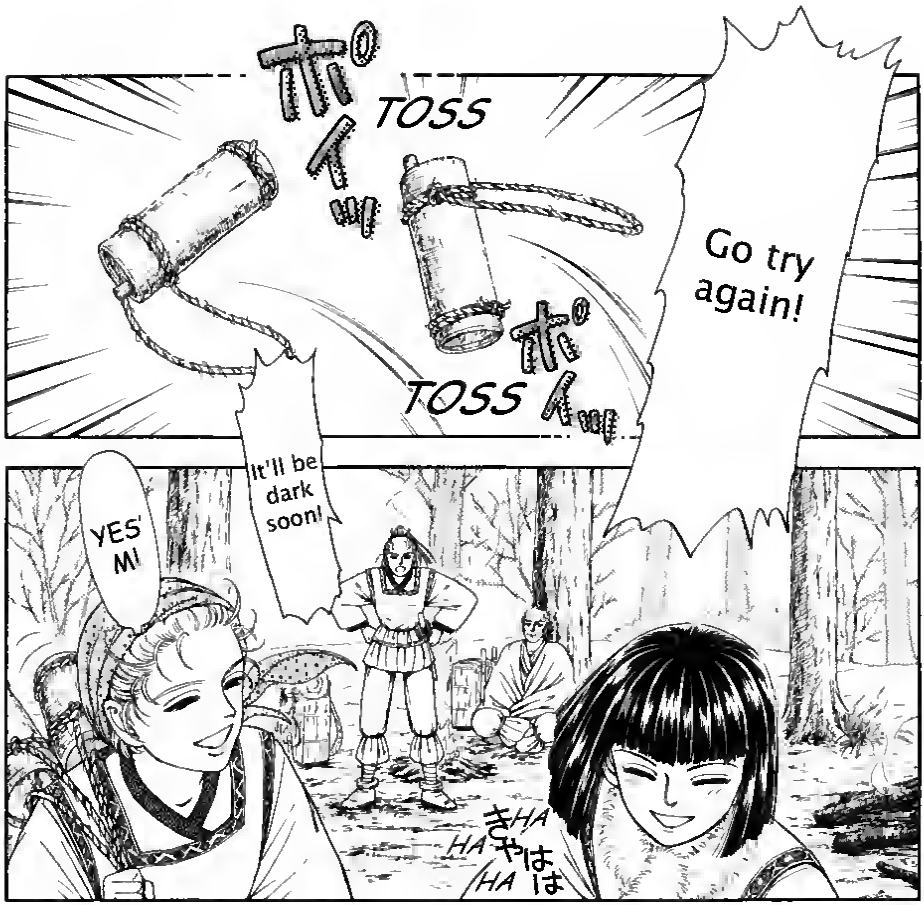
No!
No!
I'm...

I'm not...
I'm not!
Uuh ...
HUFF HUFF

Stay back!
Kai...
I like you, Kai...
I...
It's okay if you're not good.
I don't mind if you're hopeless

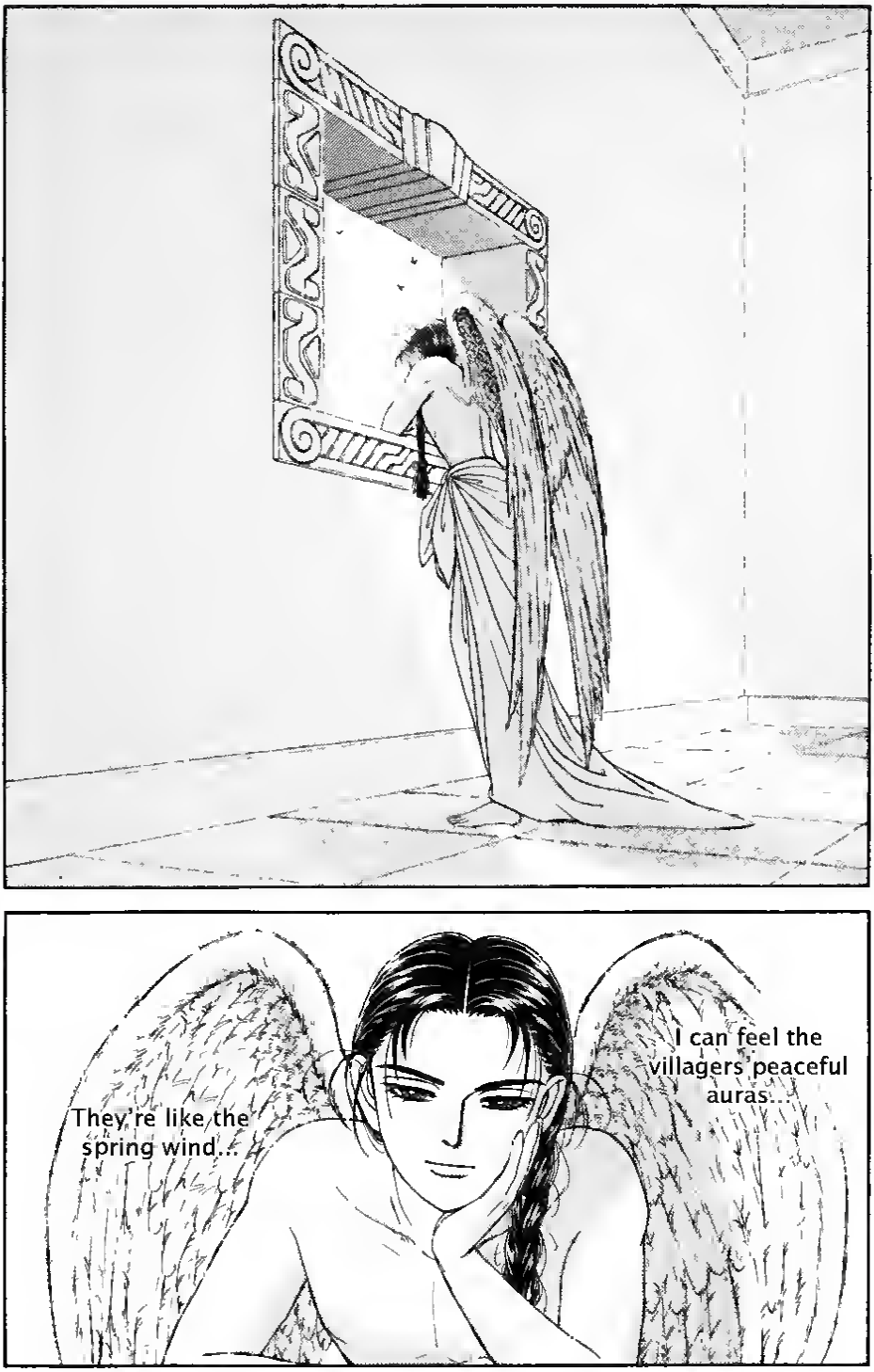
I like you no matter who you are...
ぎゅっ
SQUEEZE

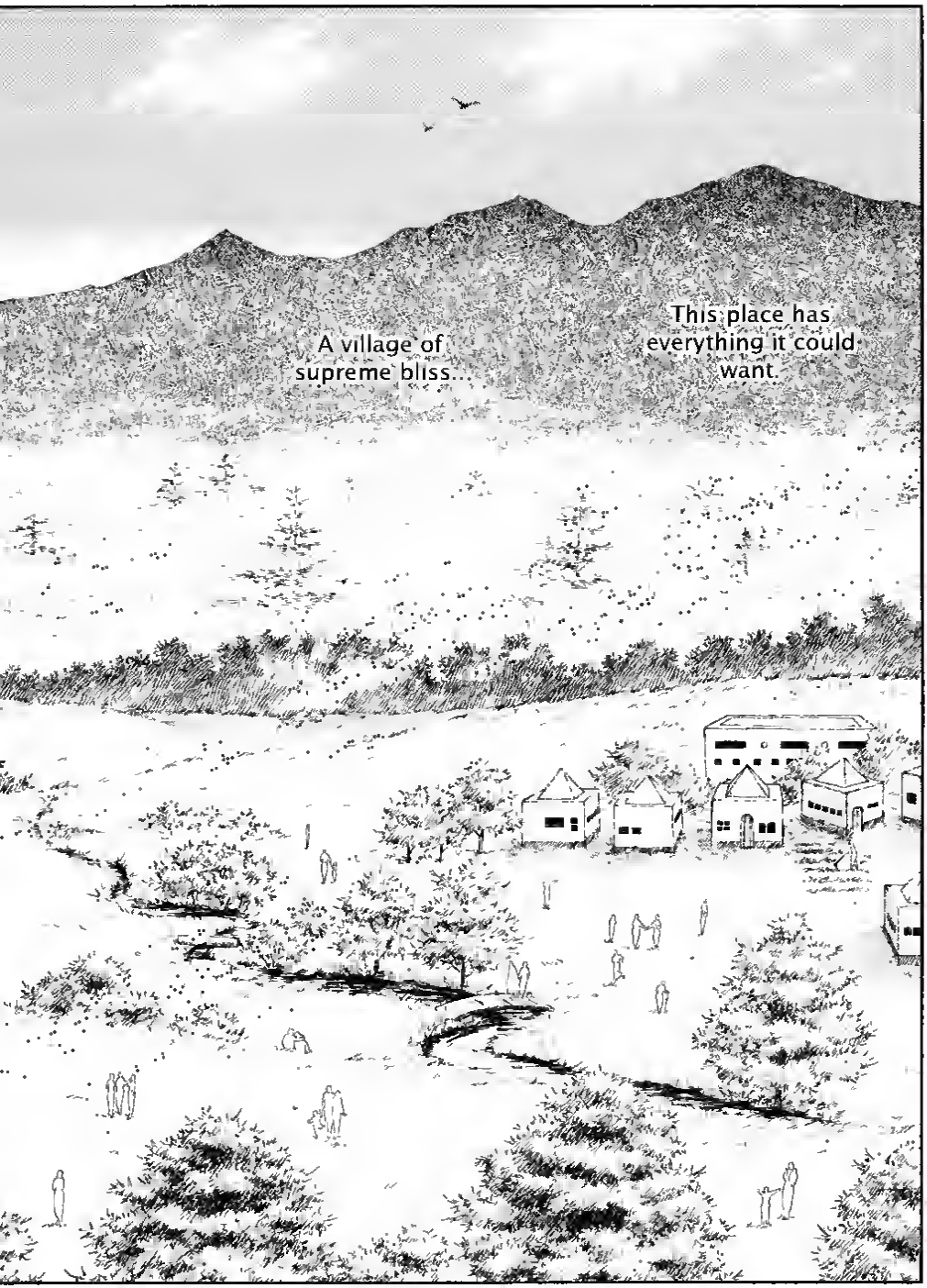
HEE HEE
HEH HEH HEH
...Couldn't find any water?
I just did what Mother did.
Tamia just touched the ground and focused, and water came gushing up.
You should've seen it!
GIGGLE
...So? Where's the water?
Well, I... didn't take anything to put it in.
I could feel the water in the ground, somehow ...


TOSS
TOSS
Go try again!
It'll be dark soon!
YES' M!
HA HA
きゃはは

Ka-
tsura?
Kai's
fine.
If he can
laugh like
that...
There was
a boy we...
...
failed
to take
back.
I named
him...
I was with
him all the
time...

Even though he was hurting...
...But in the end, I couldn't do a thing for him.
Because I...
...was a woman...
Ichirota...

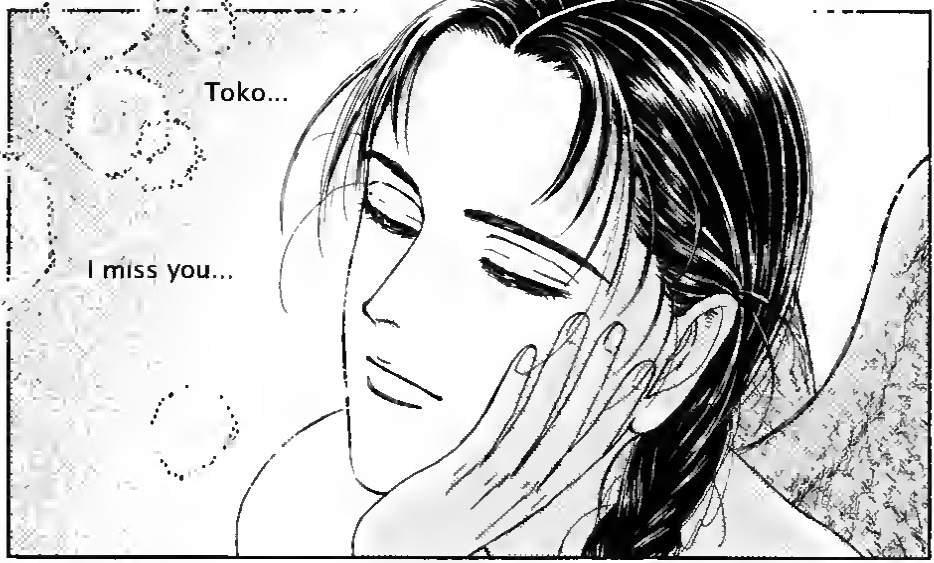

They're like the spring wind...
I can feel the villagers' peaceful auras...

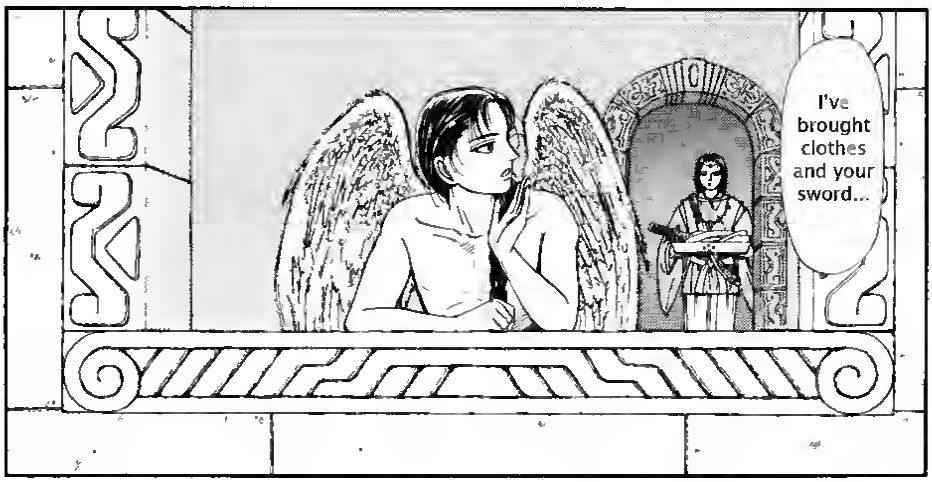

A village of supreme bliss...
This place has everything it could want.

How many years has it been since I felt this quiet and tranquil?
If I could live here with Toko...

Throw away my sword...

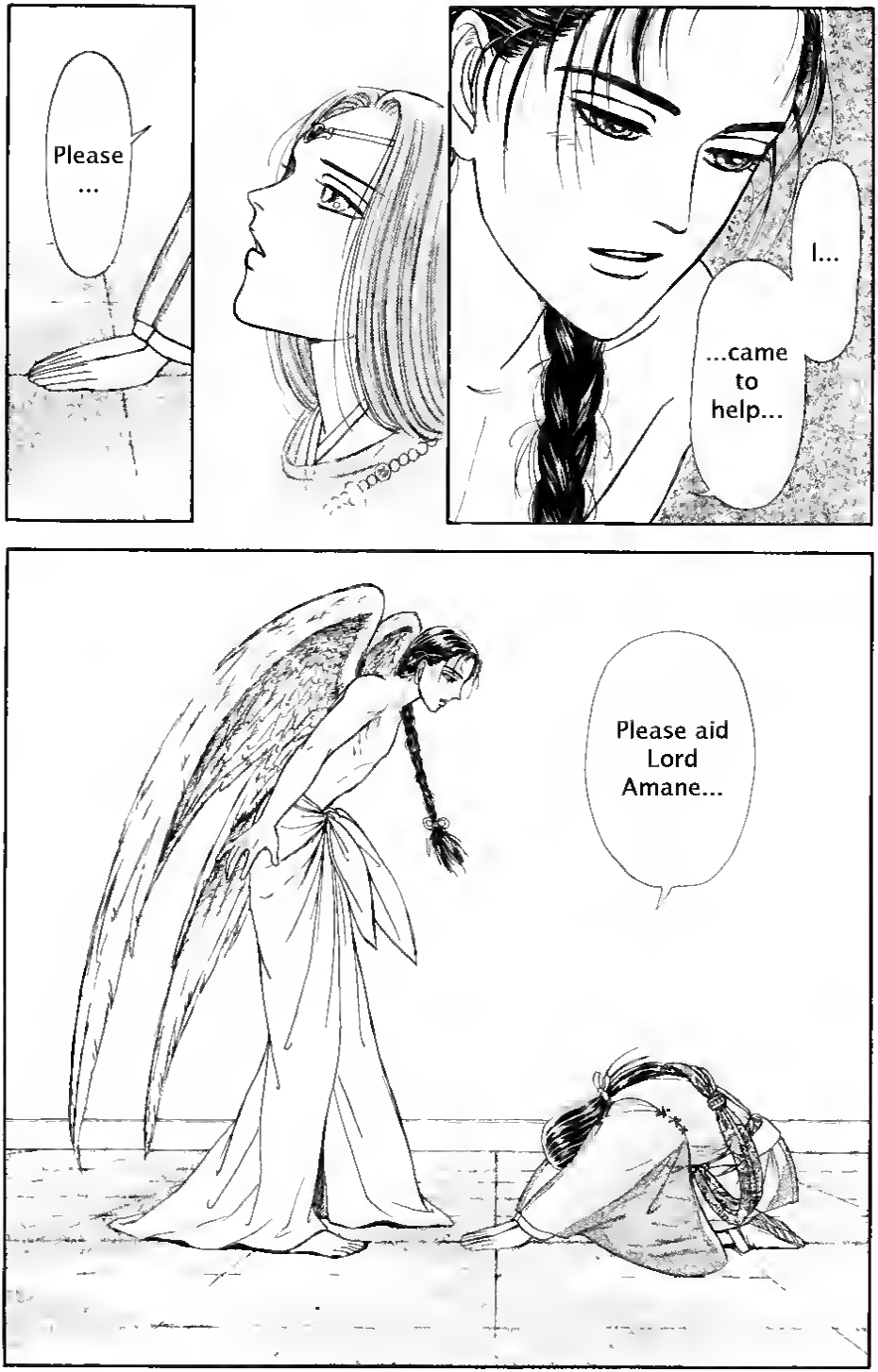
Just live, in perfect happiness...

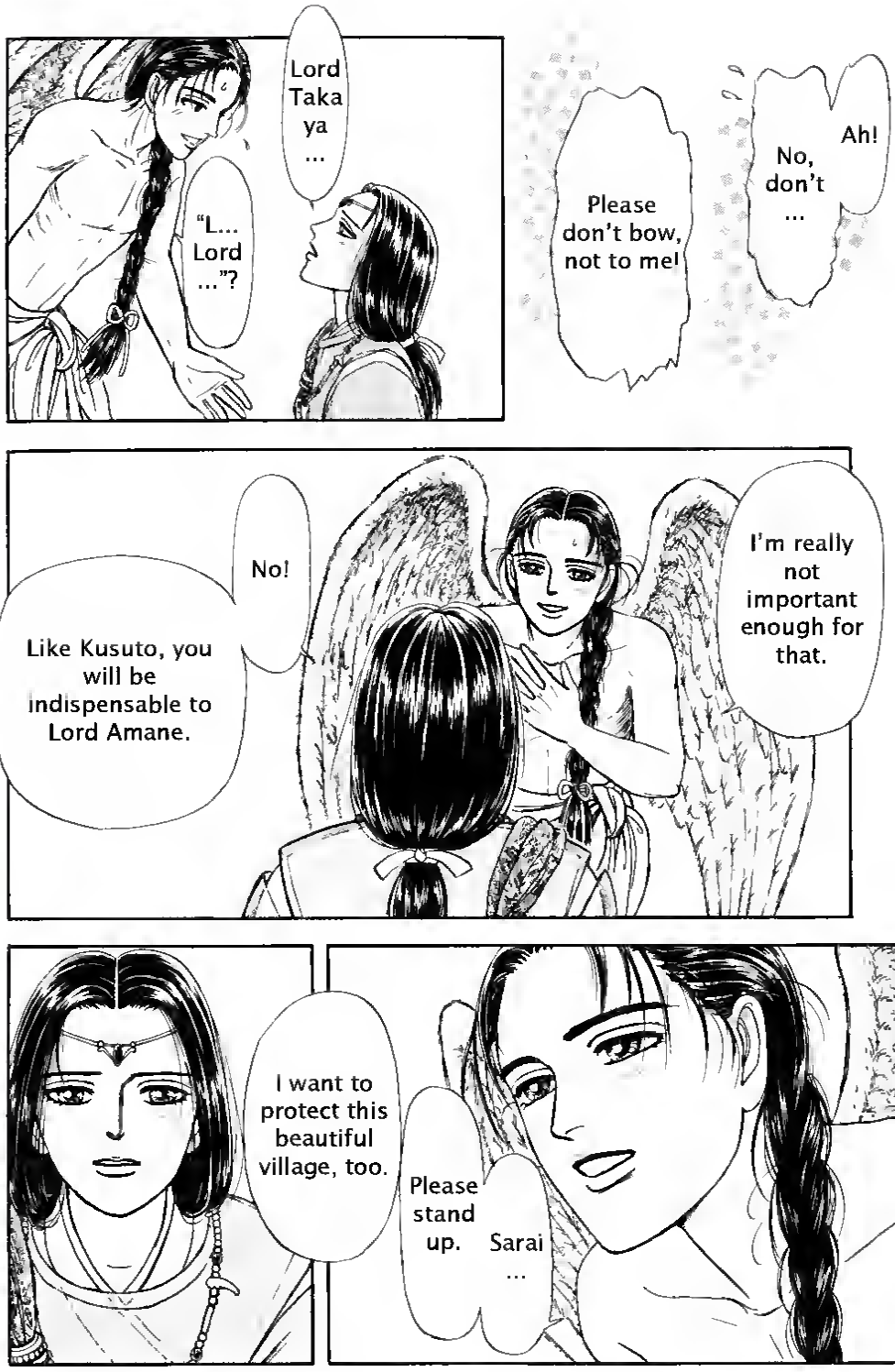


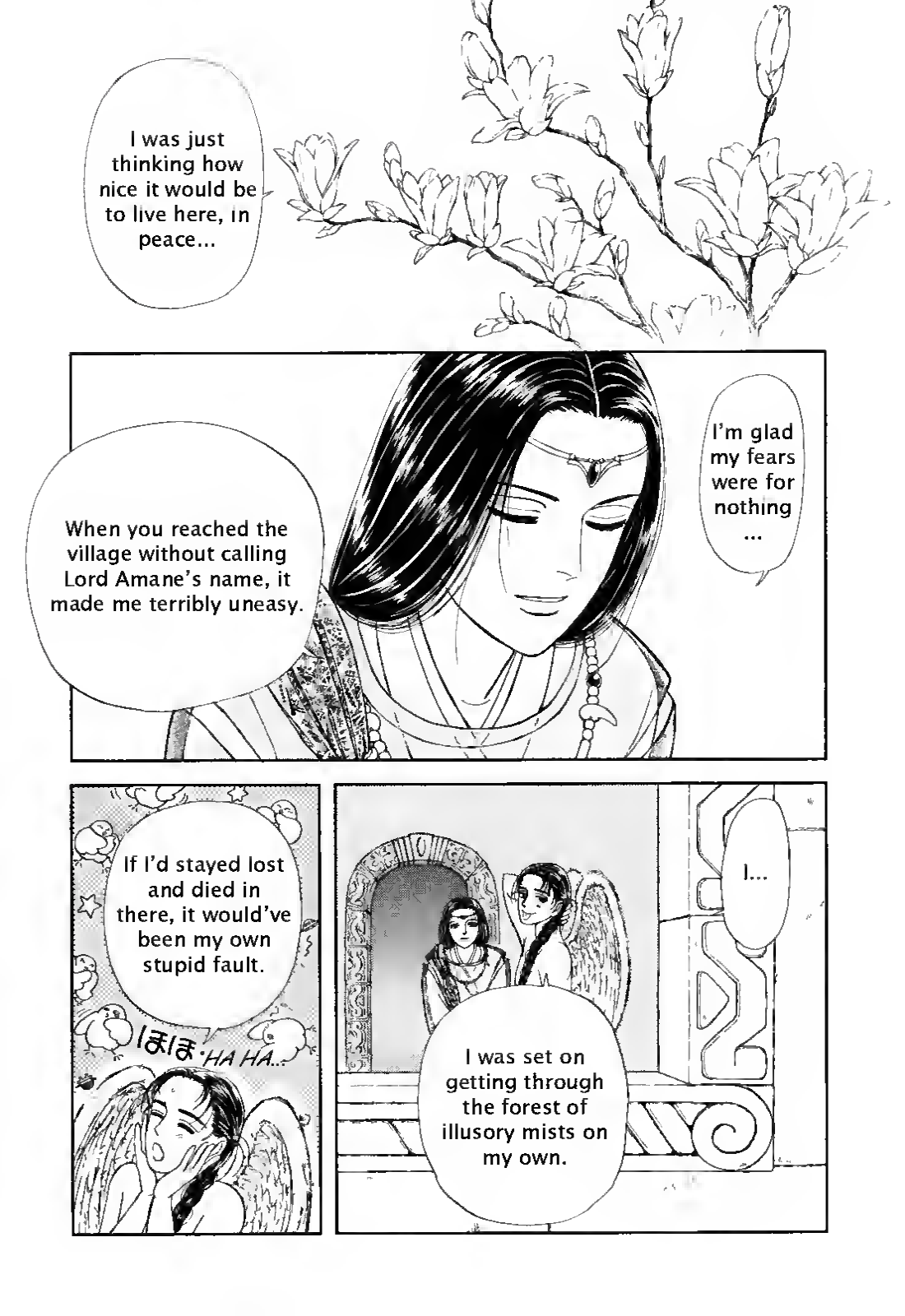


Huh?
Oh ...
Thanks.
My name is Sarai.
I'll help you dress...
N-no, I'll do it myself.

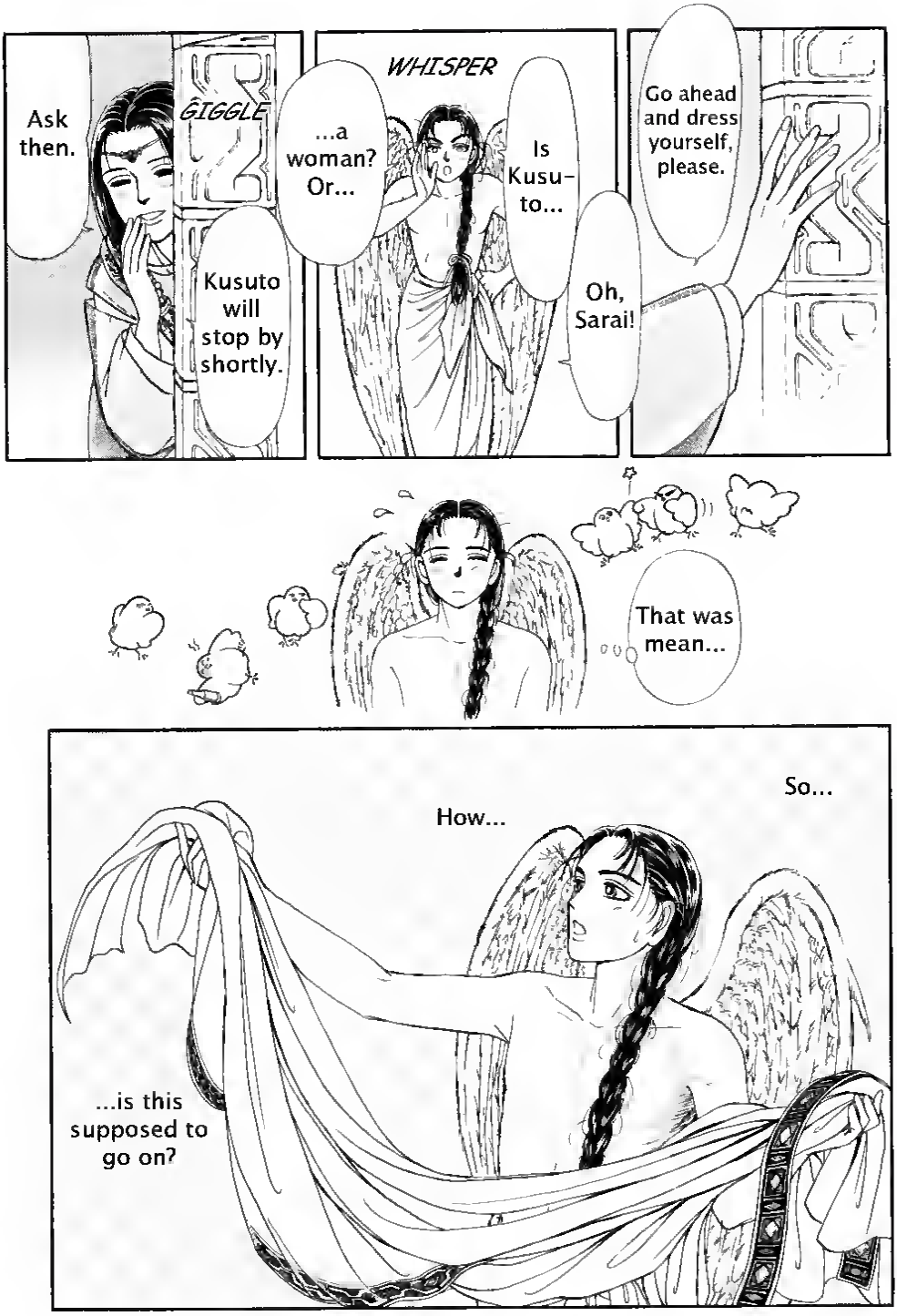
Why didn't you call Lord Amane's name?
Why ...?
Huh ...?
I...
Didn't you come here seeking Lord Amane's mercy?

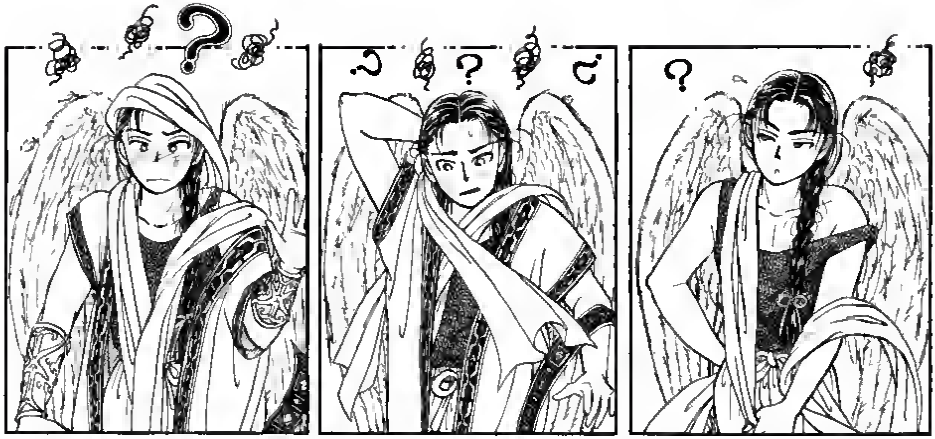

Please ...
I...
...came to help...
Please aid Lord Amane...

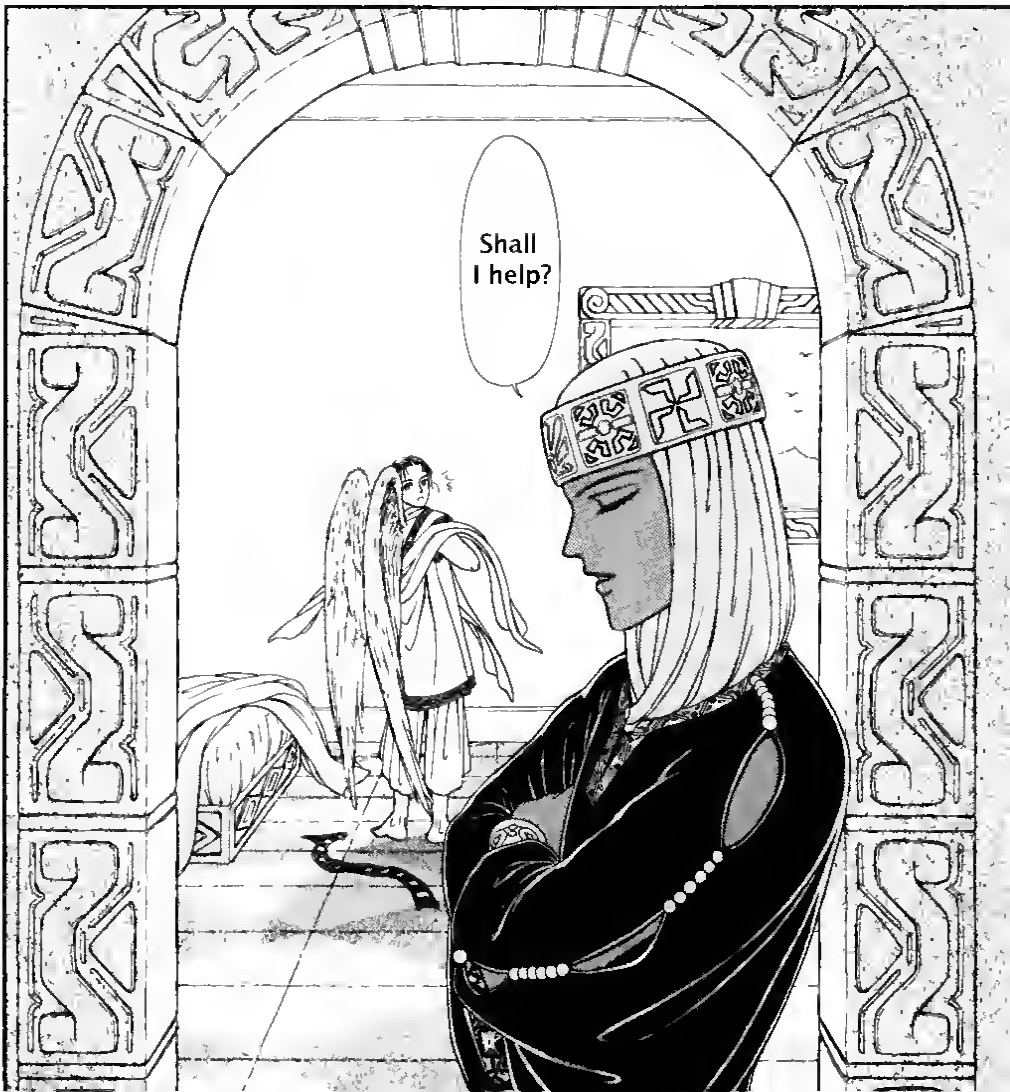

Lord Takaya ...
"L... Lord ..."?
Please don't bow, not to me!
No, don't ...
Ah!
No!
Like Kusuto, you will be indispensable to Lord Amane.
I'm really not important enough for that.
I want to protect this beautiful village, too.
Please stand up.
Sarai ...

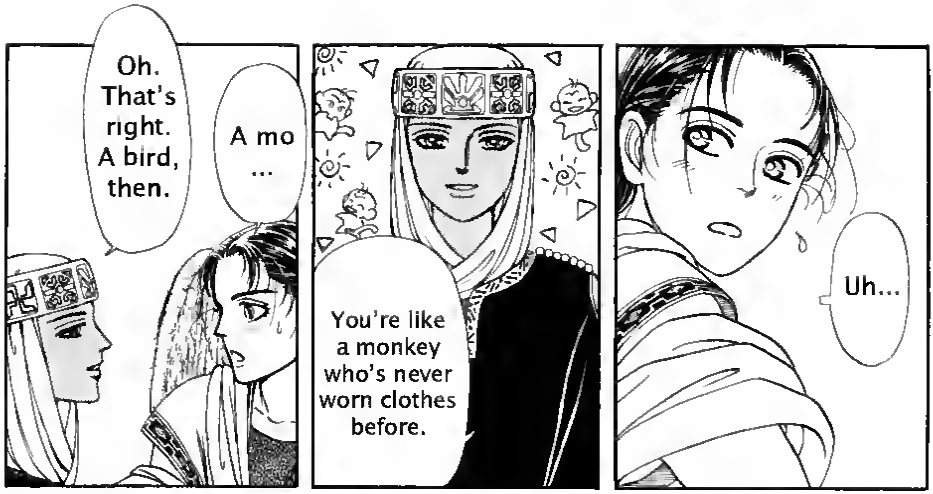

I was just thinking how nice it would be to live here, in peace...
When you reached the village without calling Lord Amane's name, it made me terribly uneasy.
I'm glad my fears were for nothing ...
If I'd stayed lost and died in there, it would've been my own stupid fault.
HA HA...
I...
I was set on getting through the forest of illusory mists on my own.

GIGGLE
You're just as Lady Kaguya said you'd be.
Just being around you is... relaxing, somehow.
Yeah, people tend to warm up to me fast.
Even though being near Kusuto makes me too nervous to speak...
My... I...
Oh, dear. I'm not acting at all like myself.
Espe-cially girls.
Oh, you're bad!

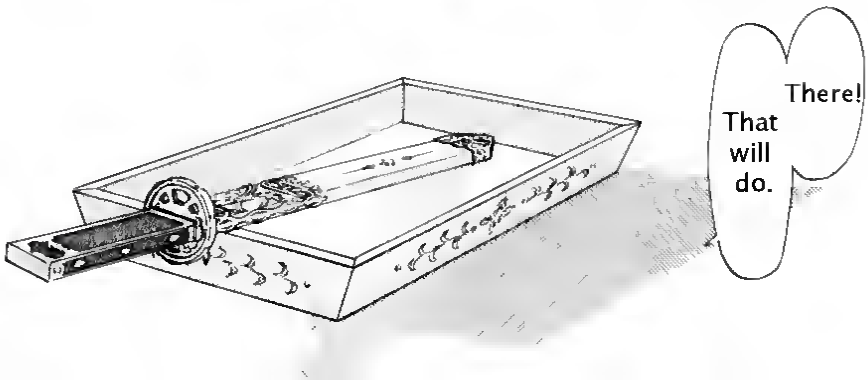

Ask then.
GIGGLE
Kusuto will stop by shortly.
WHISPER
...a woman? Or...
Is Kusu-to...
Oh, Sarai!
Go ahead and dress yourself, please.
That was mean...
So...
How...
...is this supposed to go on?

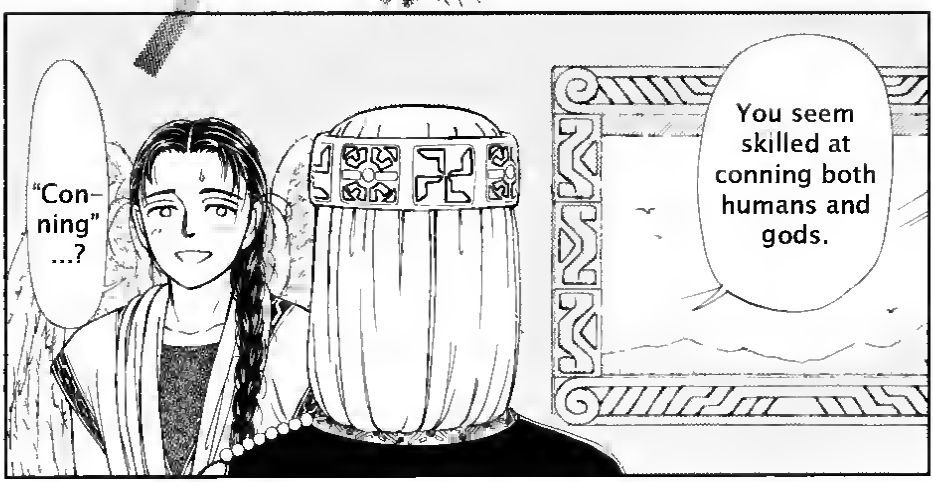

?
?
?


Shall
I help?


Oh. That's right. A bird, then.
A mo ...
You're like a monkey who's never worn clothes before.
Uh...

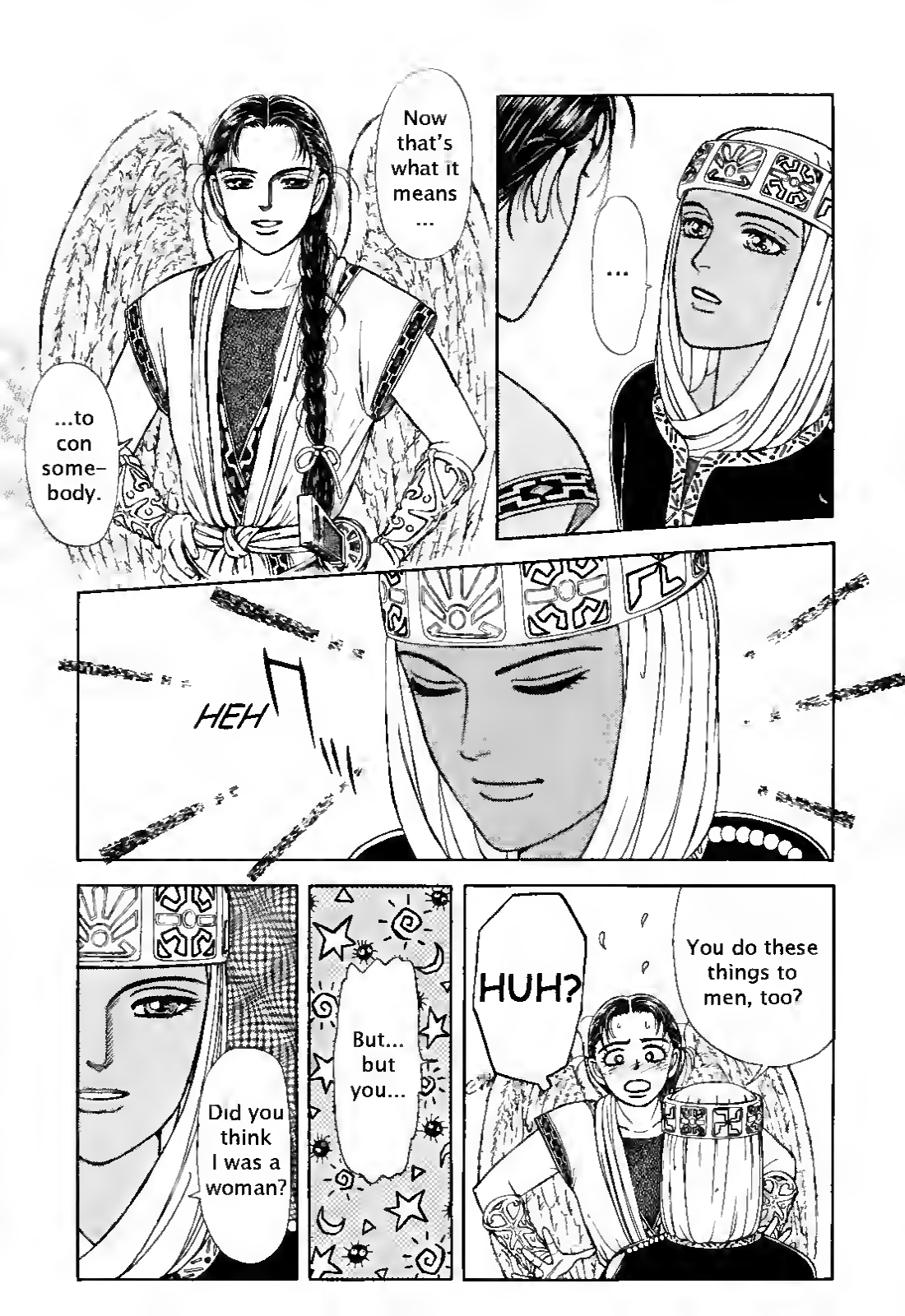
Will I be able to do this next time?
Lady Kaguya had these clothes made especially for you.
Well, my wings get in the way. It's hard to put on.
If you don't wear them properly, I'll feel bad for Lady Kaguya.


There! That will do.

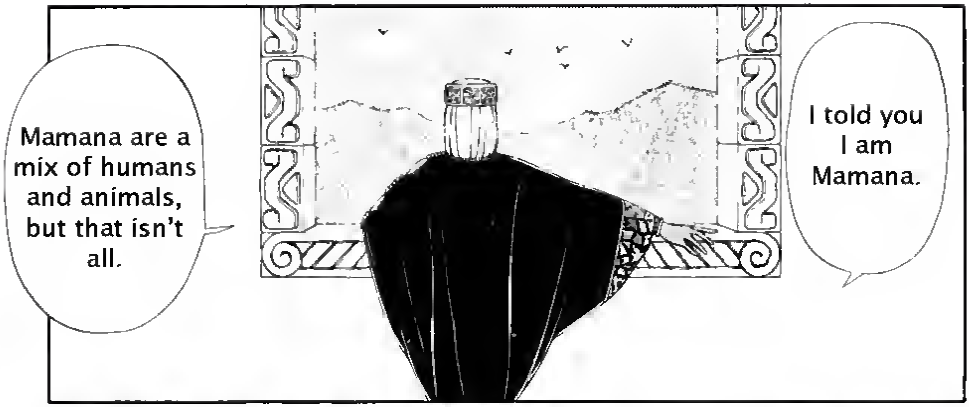

"Con-ning" ...?
You seem skilled at conning both humans and gods.

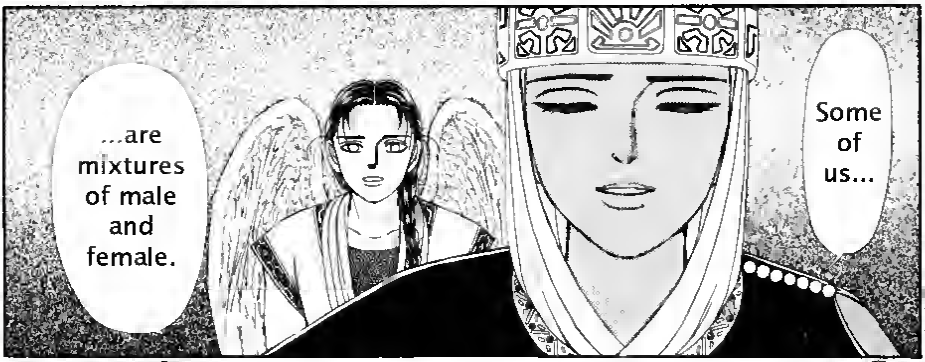
Your body ...
You've charmed me as well.
Your wings ...
Your wave-length ...

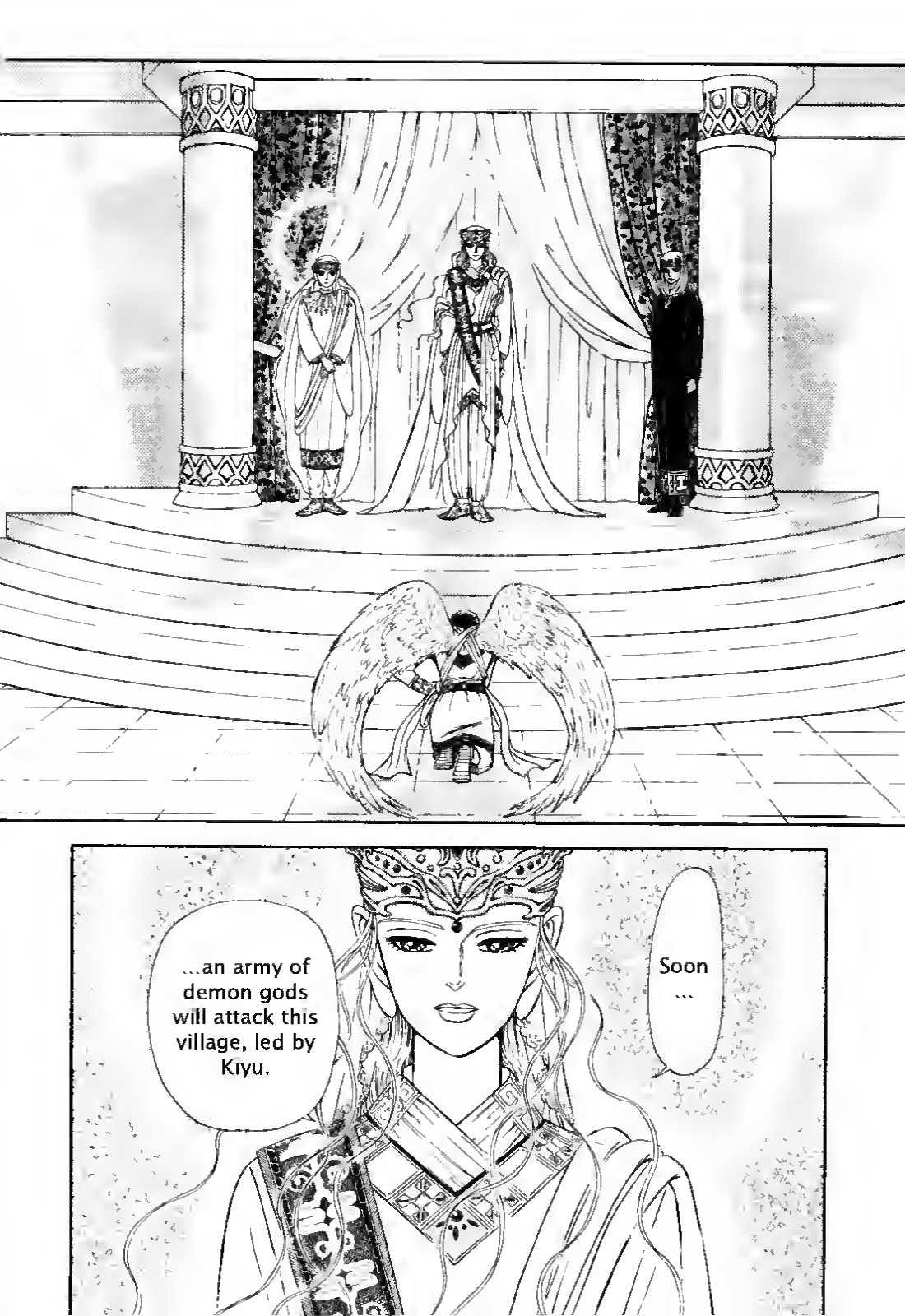
And... this face...
... Mm ...
Mm ...


Now that's what it means ...
...to con some-body.
...
HEH
Did you think I was a woman?
But... but you...
HUH?
You do these things to men, too?

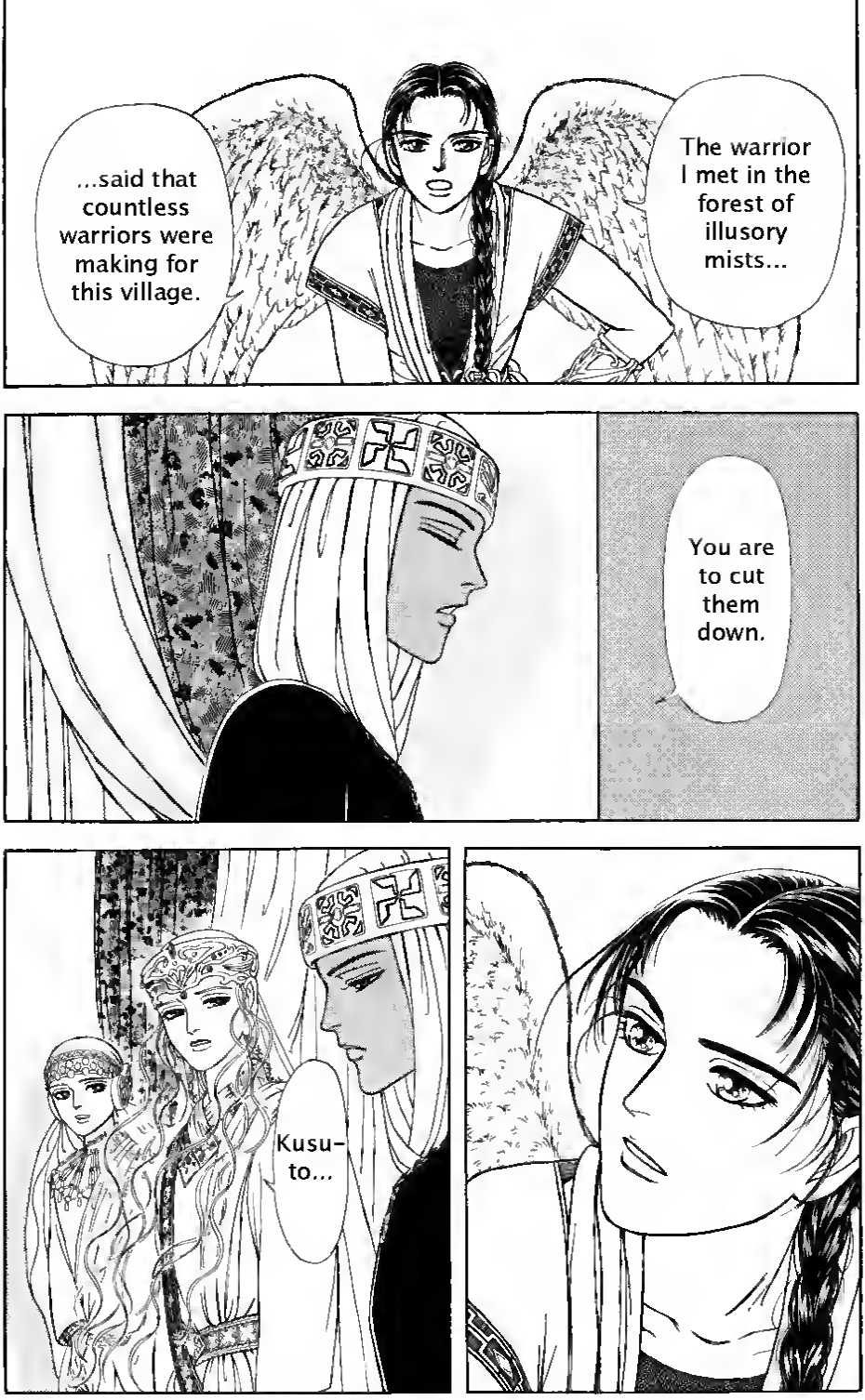
...And now you think I'm a man?
You should be able to tell from that.
Read my wave-length.
I... I can't tell.
How could I not even tell gender?
I've never felt a wavelength like this before...

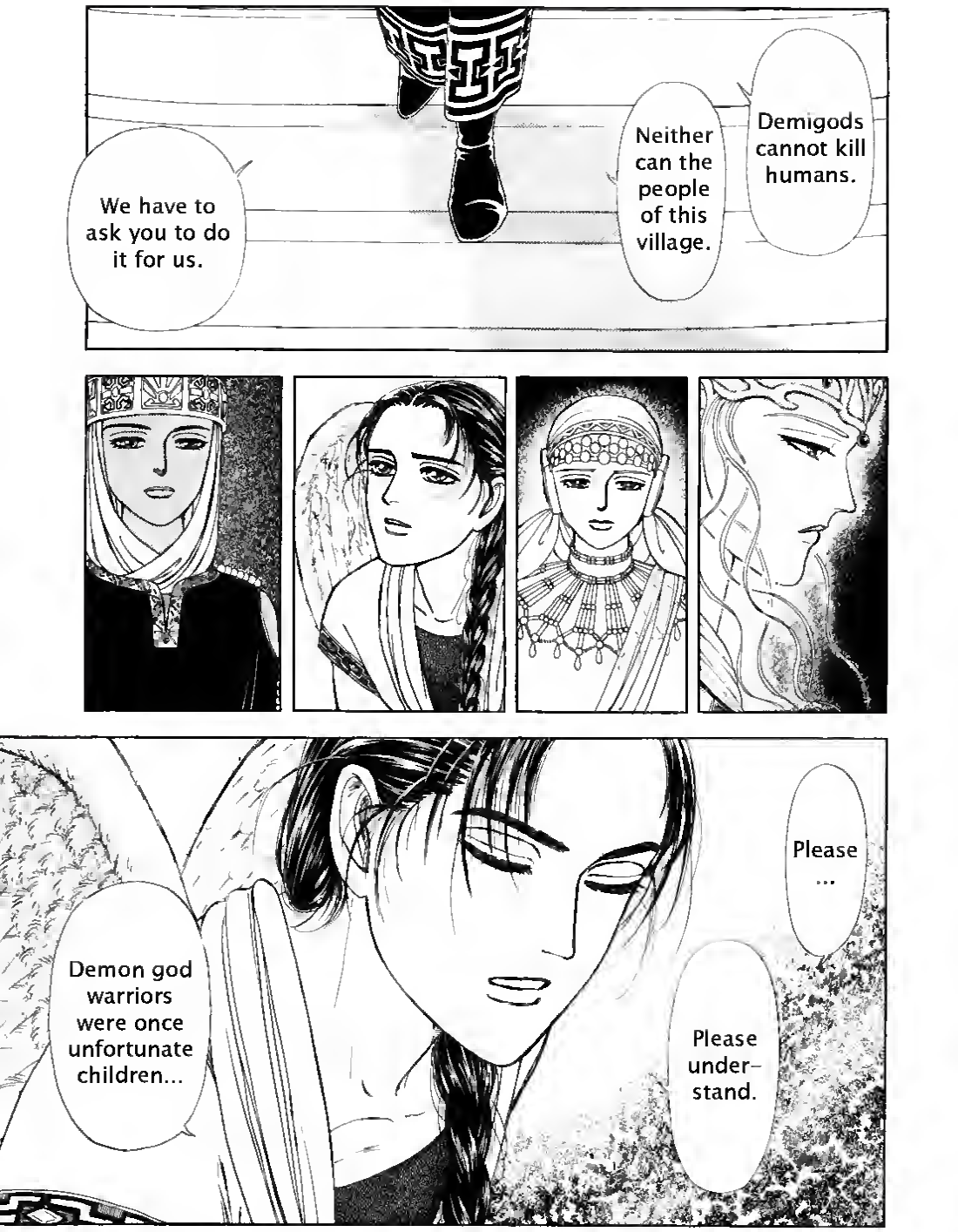

Mamana are a mix of humans and animals, but that isn't all.
I told you I am Mamana.

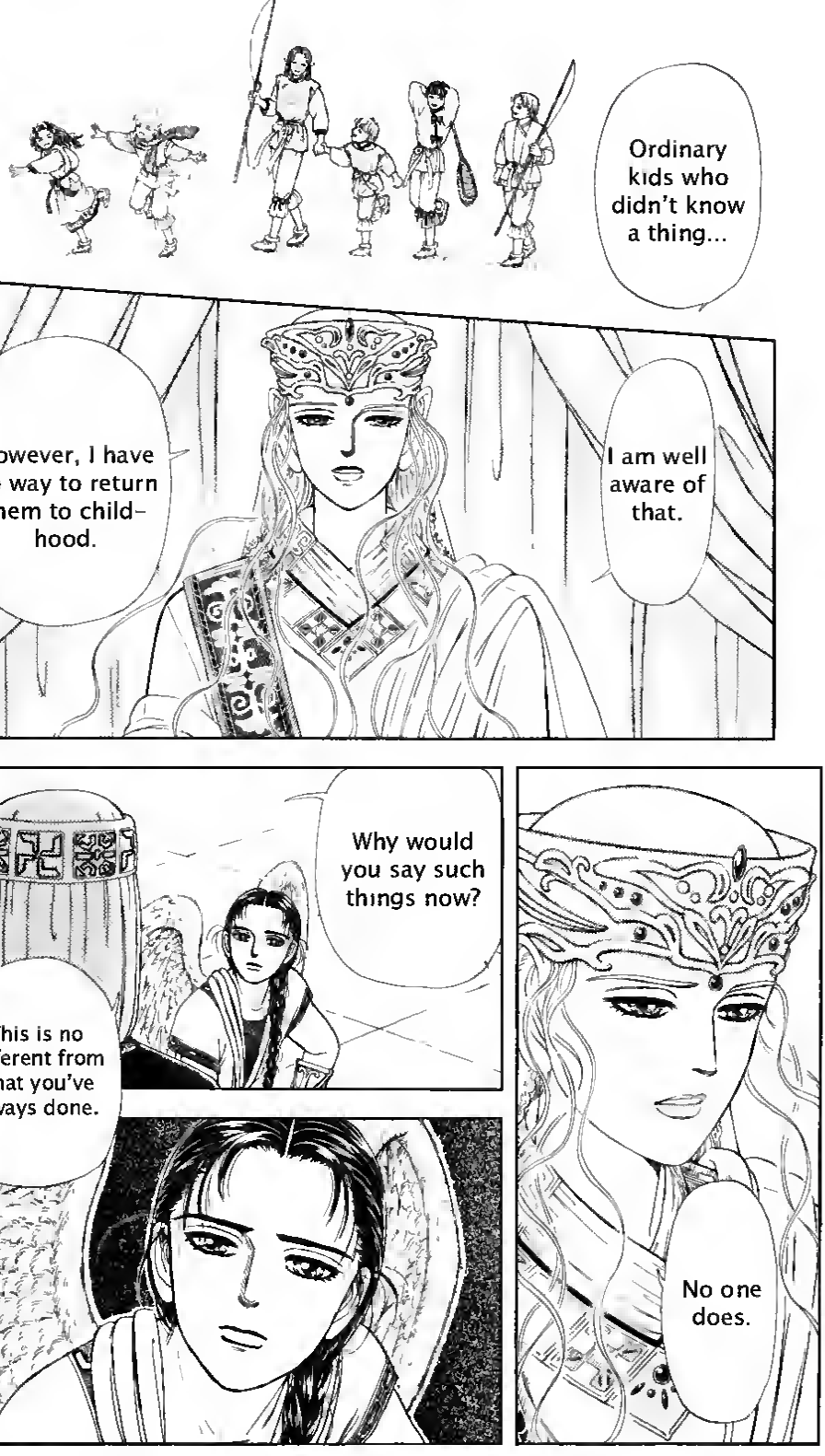

...are mixtures of male and female.
Some of us...

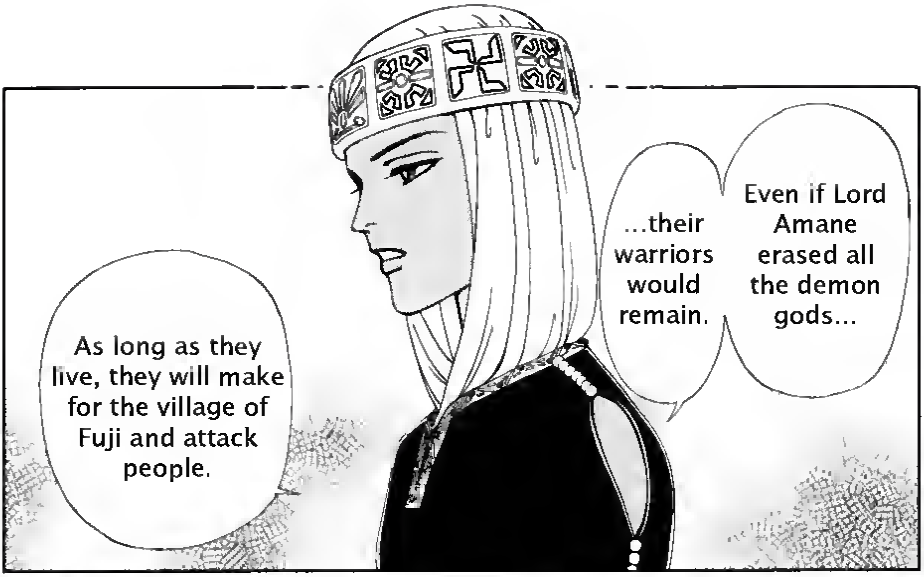

Soon
...
...an army of demon gods will attack this village, led by Kiyu.

I will ...
Taka ya...
You will fight the demon gods as my sword, won't you?
Your Holi-ness ...
There is something I'd like to ask you...
What ...
What about the demon god warriors?
Go ahead.

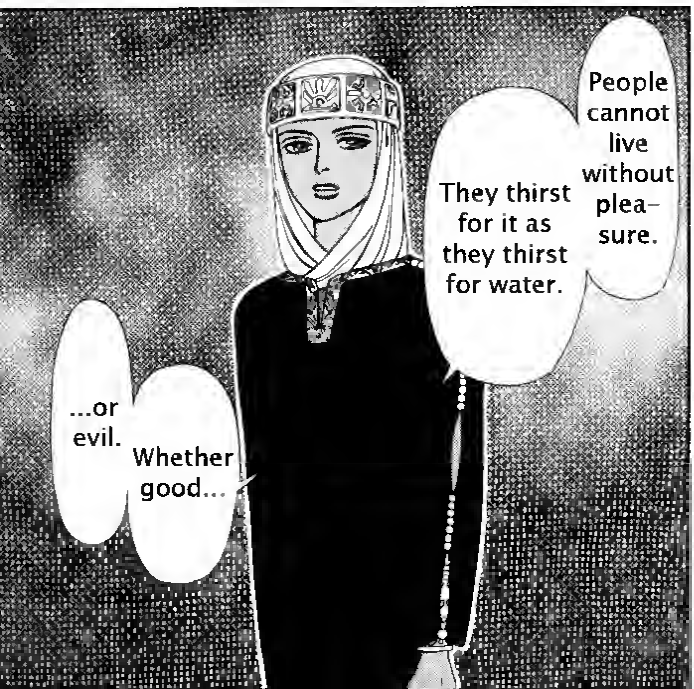

...said that countless warriors were making for this village.
The warrior I met in the forest of illusory mists...
You are to cut them down.
Kusu-to...

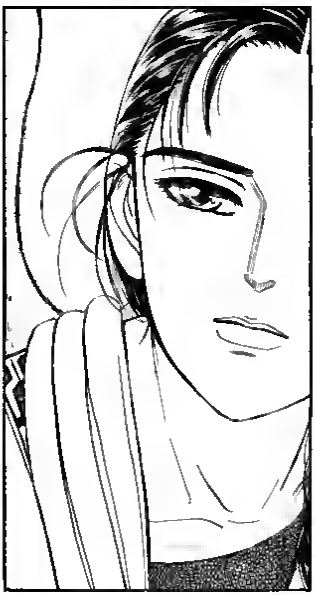

We have to ask you to do it for us.
Neither can the people of this village.
Demigods cannot kill humans.
Demon god warriors were once unfortunate children...
Please understand.
Please ...

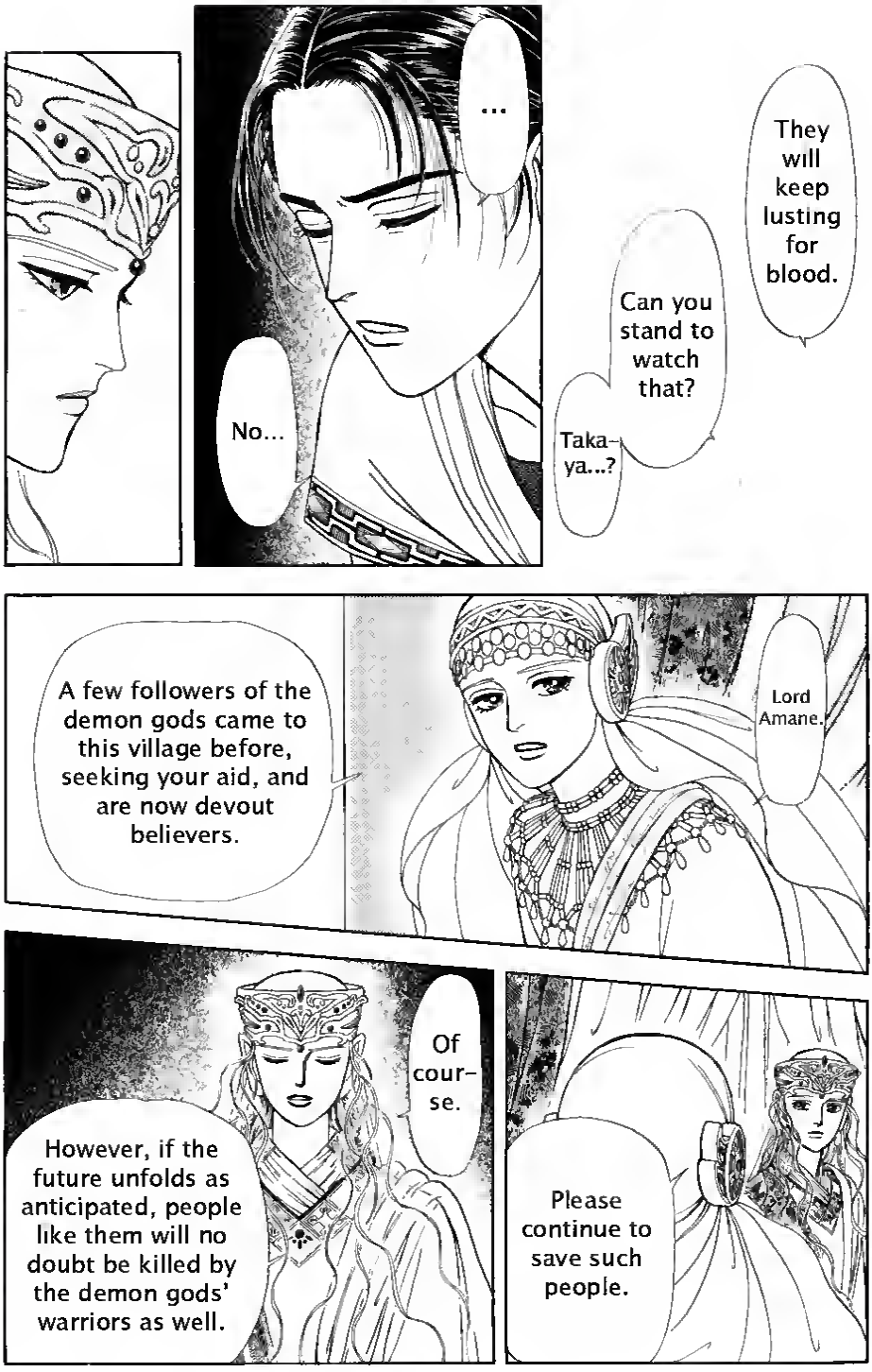

Ordinary kids who didn't know a thing...
However, I have no way to return them to child-hood.
I am well aware of that.
Why would you say such things now?
This is no different from what you've always done.
No one does.

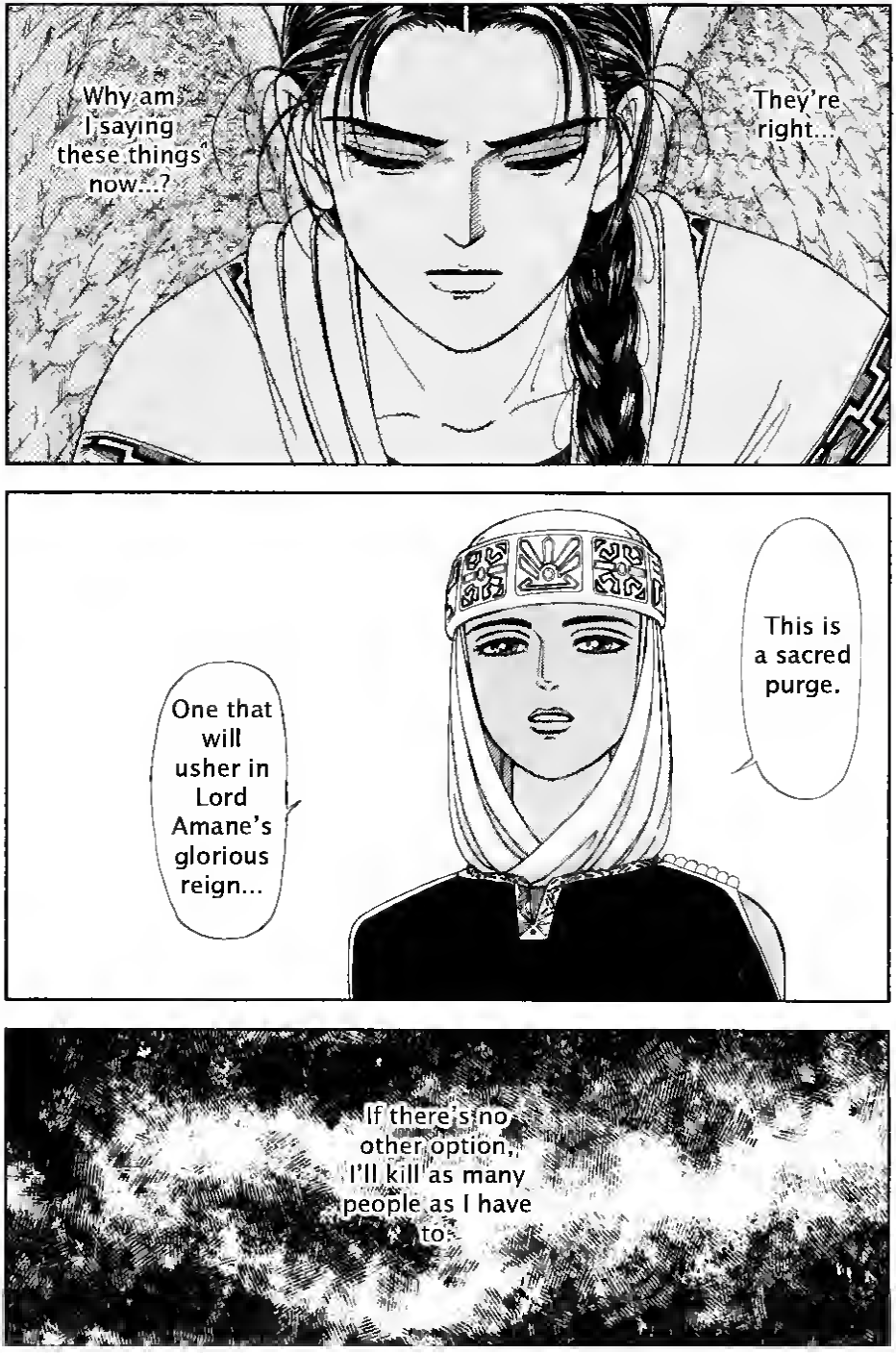

Even if Lord Amane erased all the demon gods...
...their warriors would remain.
As long as they live, they will make for the village of Fuji and attack people.

To them, carnage ...
...is plea-sure.

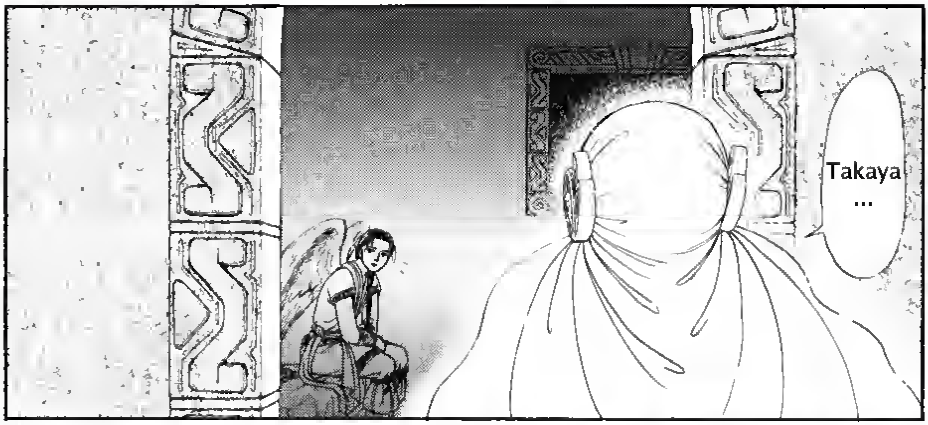

People cannot live without plea-sure.
They thirst for it as they thirst for water.
Whether good...
...or evil.

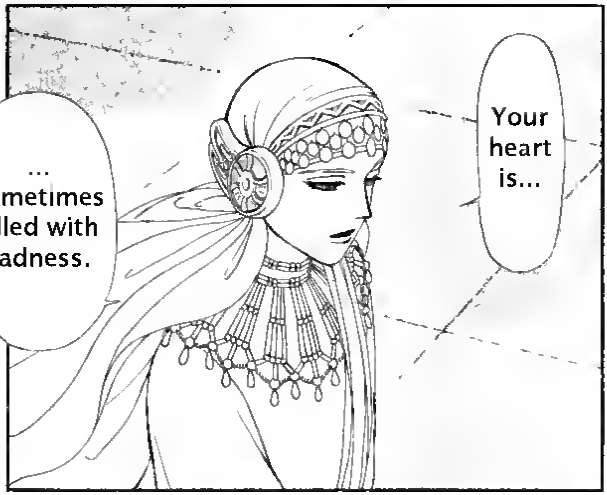



...
No...
They will keep lusting for blood.
Can you stand to watch that?
Taka-ya...?
A few followers of the demon gods came to this village before, seeking your aid, and are now devout believers.
Lord Amane.
However, if the future unfolds as anticipated, people like them will no doubt be killed by the demon gods' warriors as well.
Of cour-se.
Please continue to save such people.


Why am I saying these things now...?
They're right...
This is a sacred purge.
One that will usher in Lord Amane's glorious reign...
If there's no other option, I'll kill as many people as I have to.

I made up my
mind about that
long ago.


Takaya
...

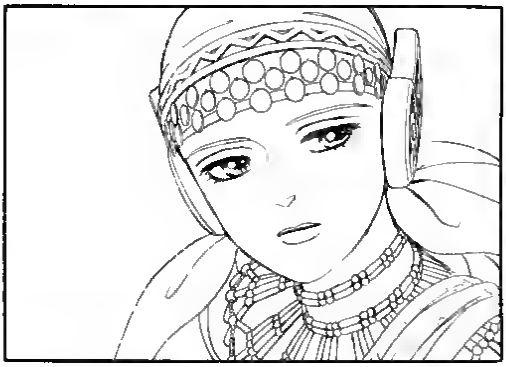

...
sometimes
filled with
sadness.
Your
heart
is...

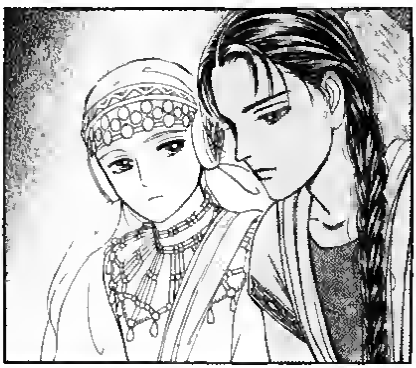
Kaguya
...

You
lie.
That isn't
true.

You're a liar, so you need someone who can see through those lies. Kai told me so.
Taka-ya...
Keeping your feelings locked inside will hurt you.
Sometimes just putting them into words helps.

Thoughts become words, words are spoken, and the speaking gives you strength.
...That's exactly why some things shouldn't be said.



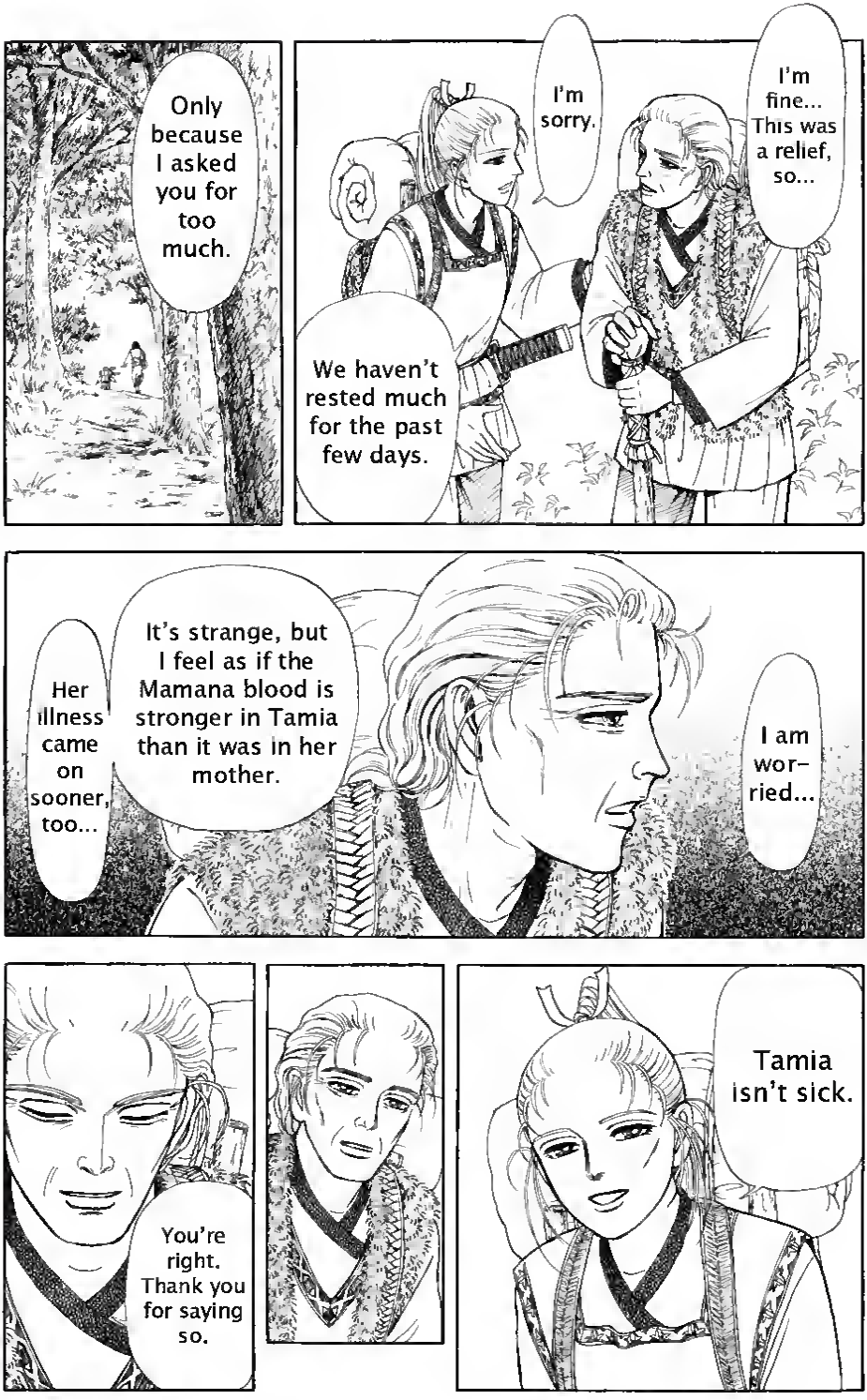


"I don't want to kill anymore ..."

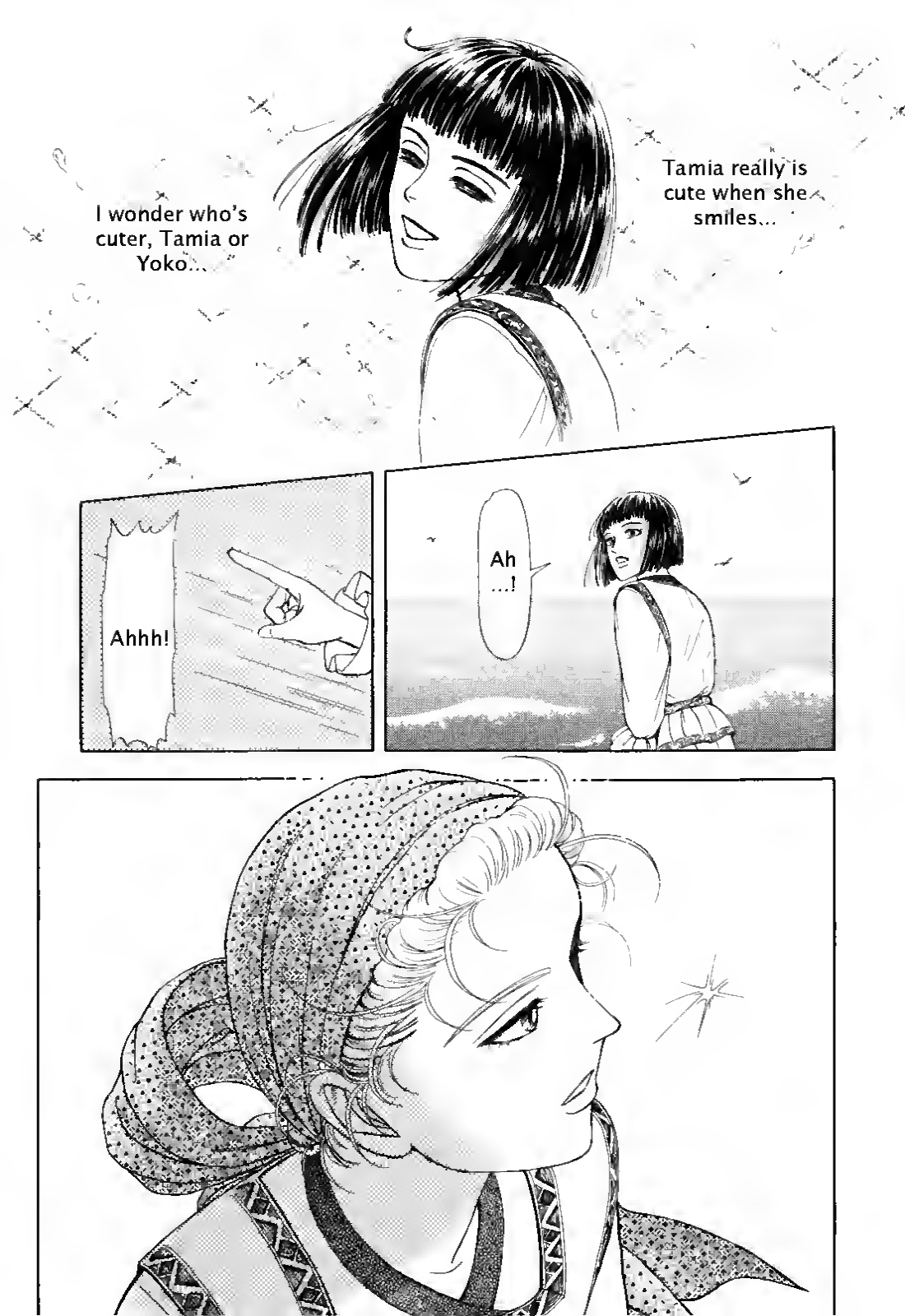
"I don't want to kill anyone else..."
Some emotions are so intense that they break people from the inside, you know.
Thank you.

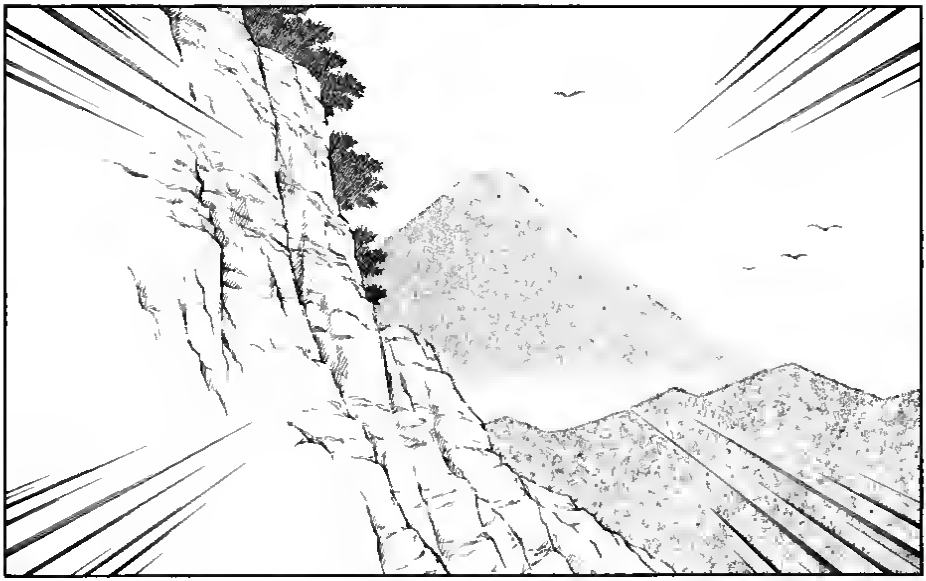
The ocean!

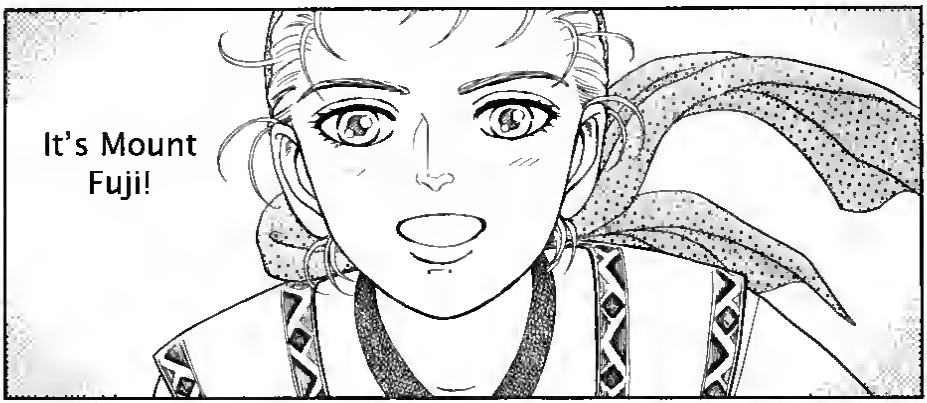
I thought I smelled saltwater ...
You're right!
Tamia, it's the ocean!
Be careful!
Me too!
Katsura! I'm going on ahead.
Haku-ji!


Only because I asked you for too much.
I'm sorry.
I'm fine... This was a relief, so...
We haven't rested much for the past few days.
Her illness came on sooner, too...
It's strange, but I feel as if the Mamana blood is stronger in Tamia than it was in her mother.
I am wor-ried...
You're right. Thank you for saying so.
Tamia isn't sick.

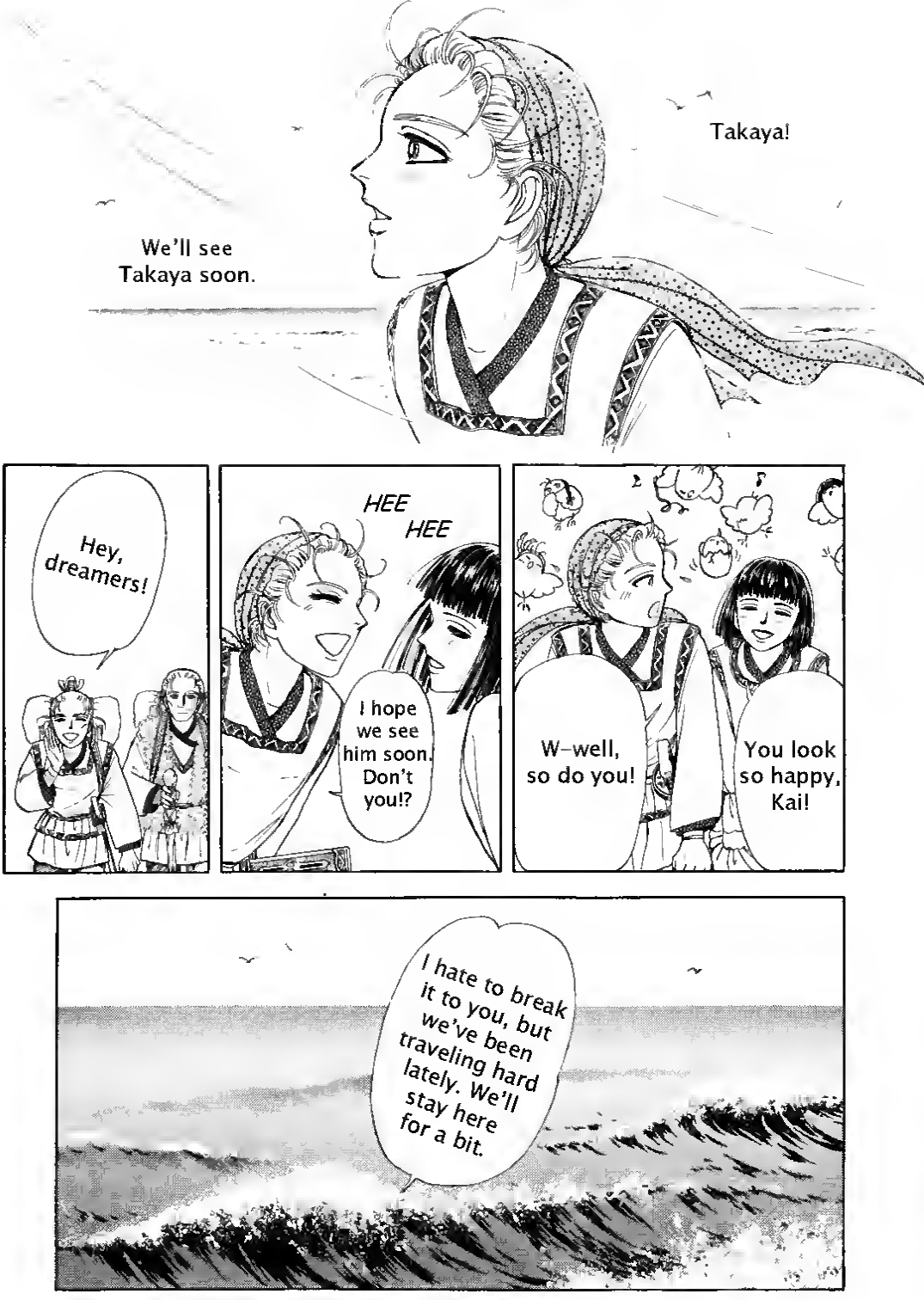
YEE EG, IT'S COO OLD!
AH HA HA HA HA
SPLASH
SPLASH
It feels won-derful!
I'm fine!
Gah, I can't take it anymore! My feet are freezing!
Wow... How can she be fine?

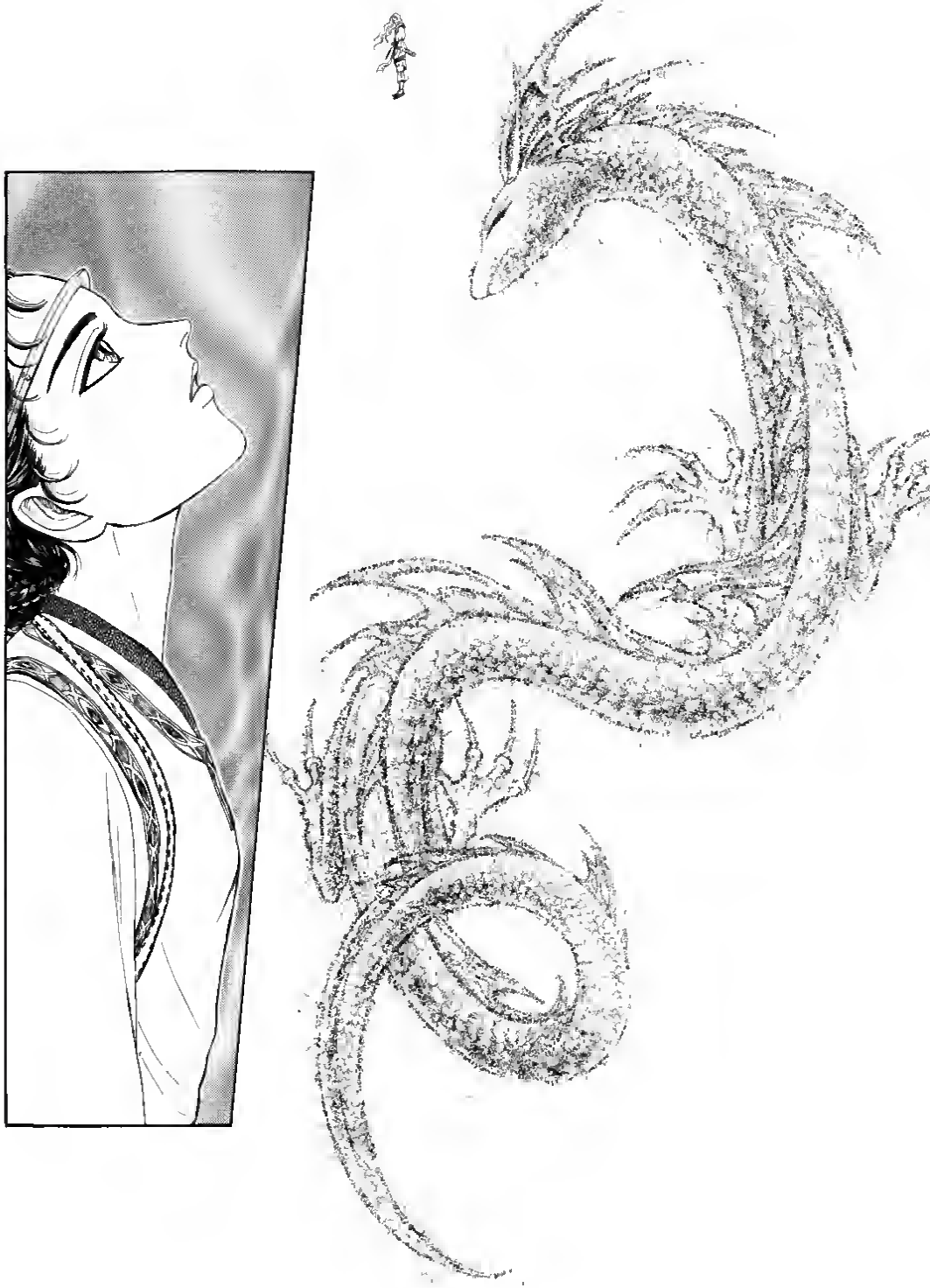

I wonder who's cuter, Tamia or Yoko...
Tamia really is cute when she smiles...
Ahhh!
Ah ...!

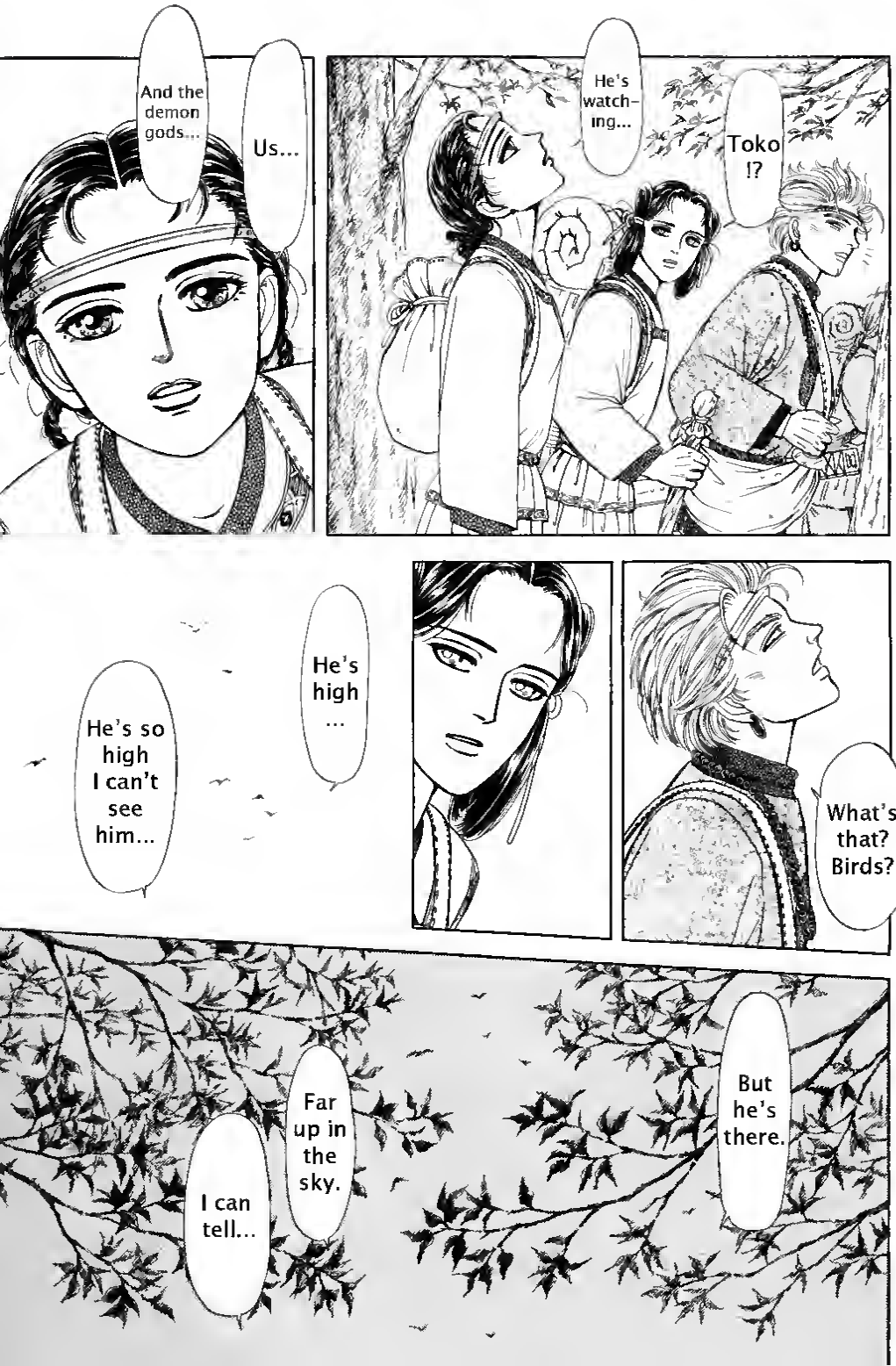


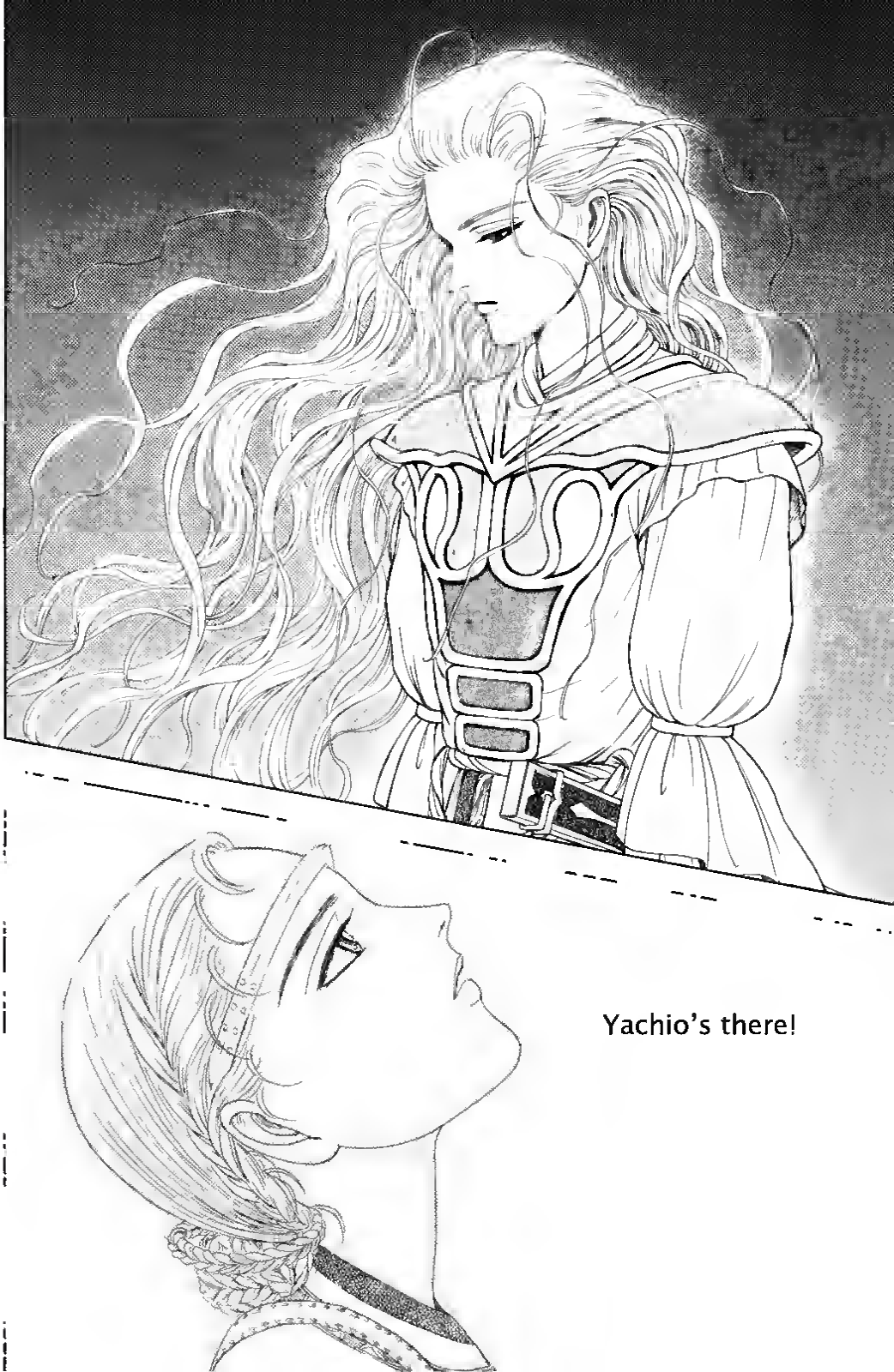

It's Mount Fuji!

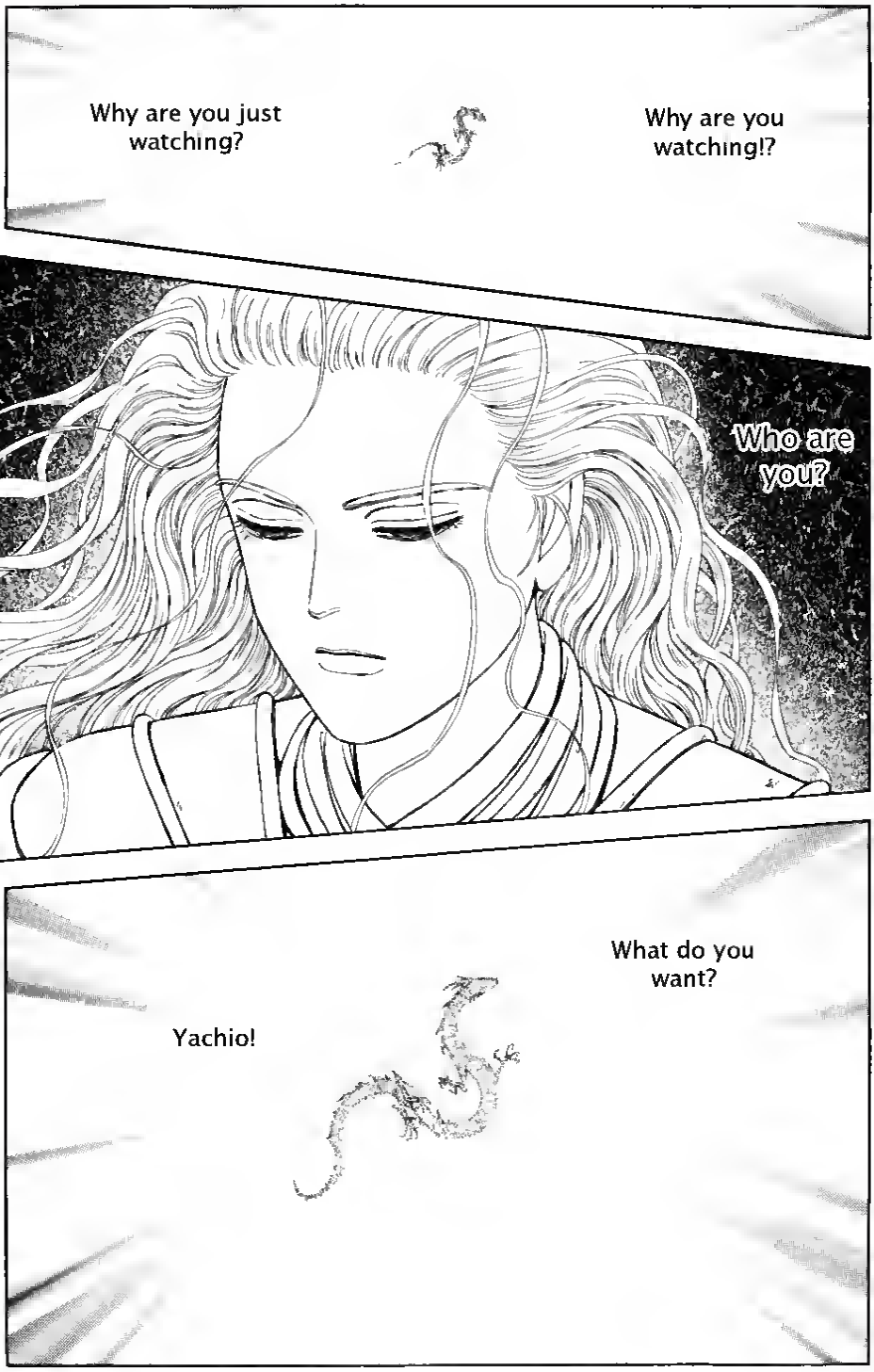
It must be Fuji.
That's ...


Takaya!
We'll see Takaya soon.
Hey, dreamers!
HEE HEE
I hope we see him soon. Don't you!?
W-well, so do you!
You look so happy, Kai!
I hate to break it to you, but we've been traveling hard lately. We'll stay here for a bit.




And the demon gods...
Us...
He's watch-ing...
Toko !?
What's that? Birds?
He's high ...
He's so high I can't see him...
But he's there.
Far up in the sky.
I can tell...


Yachio's there!

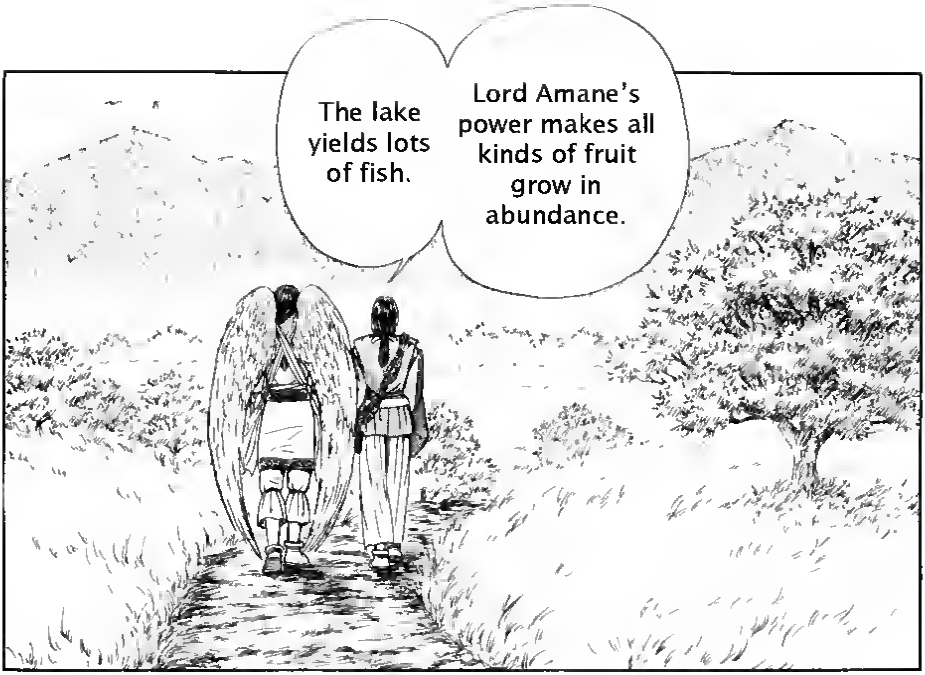

Why are you just watching?
Why are you watching!?
Who are you?
What do you want?
Yachio!

...this time it was sad, like gently falling rain.

Toko ...!
Yoko! If you don't walk, they'll think something's up.

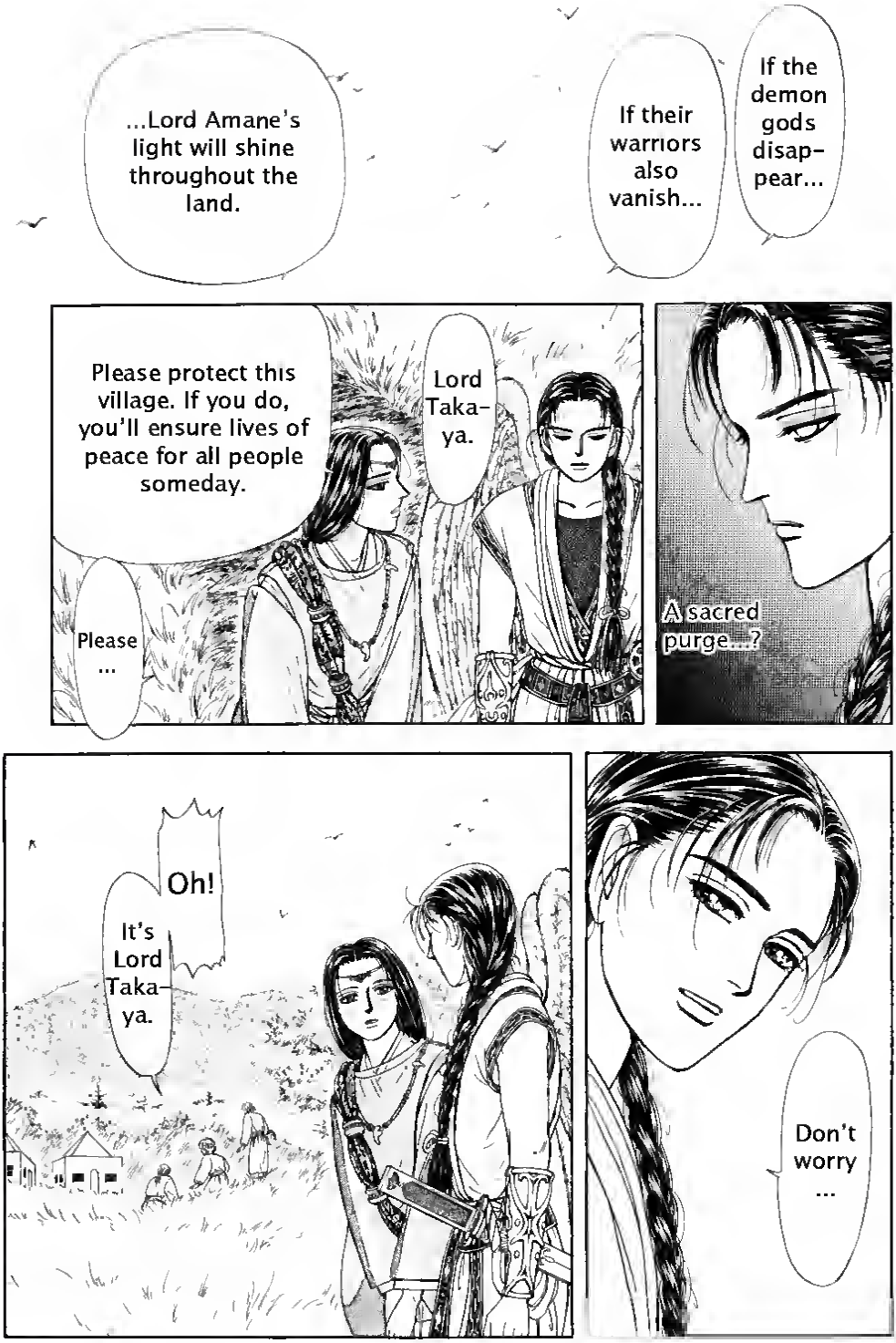
I...
I was sad, just now...

Yachio's wavelength was sad, somehow...
Up until now, it was so quiet he didn't even seem human, but...

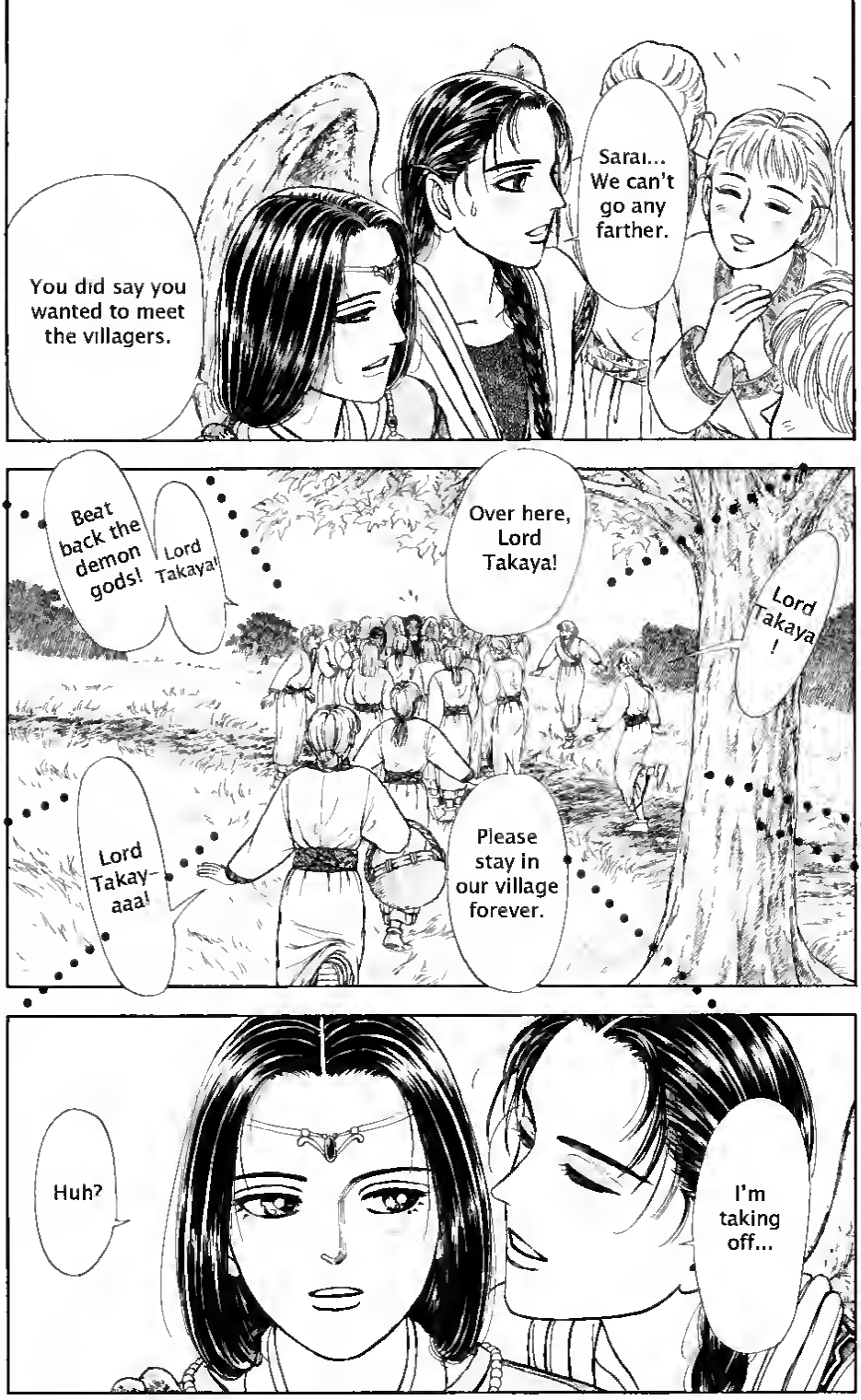

The lake yields lots of fish.
Lord Amane's power makes all kinds of fruit grow in abundance.

Of course Lord Amane heals all illnesses quickly.
I hear this was Kusuto's idea. The people grow their own edible plants, too.

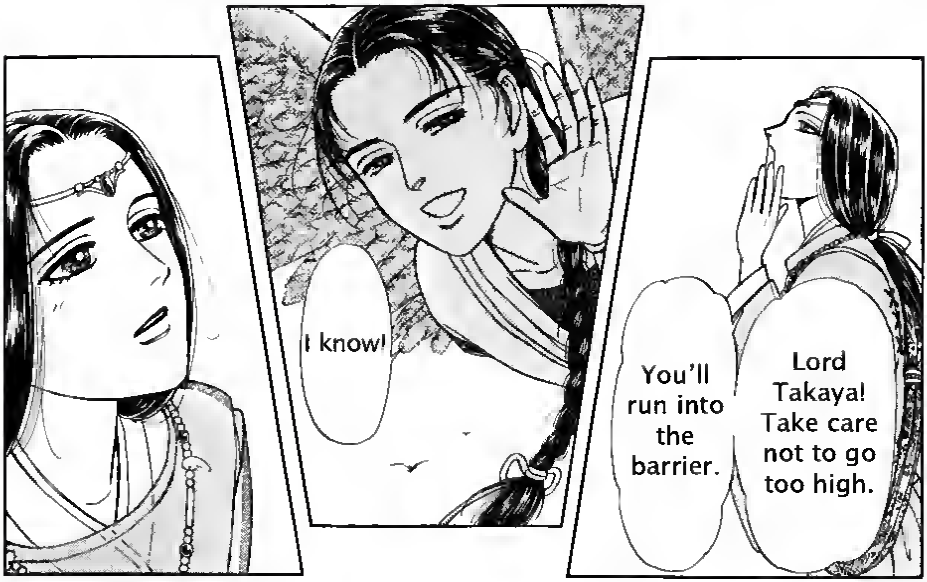
Those who pray to Lord Amane here are given everything.


...Lord Amane's light will shine throughout the land.
If their warriors also vanish...
If the demon gods disap-pear...
Please protect this village. If you do, you'll ensure lives of peace for all people someday.
Lord Taka-ya.
Please ...
A sacred purge...?
Oh!
It's Lord Taka-ya.
Don't worry ...

That's Lord Takaya
Lord Takaya!
It's Lord Takaya
Lord Takay-aaa!
That's won-derful, Lady Sarai.
I wish they'd drop the "Lord".
Yeah.
Lord Takaya?
Is it okay for you to be walking around...
Lord Takaya
We've been waiting for you.
How dashing ...
My! You're all better, aren't you!


You did say you wanted to meet the villagers.
Sarai... We can't go any farther.
Beat back the demon gods!
Lord Takaya!
Over here, Lord Takaya!
Lord Takaya!
Lord Takay-aaa!
Please stay in our village forever.
Huh?
I'm taking off...

FWOOSH
Wow!
Ah!
Lord Takaya!
Yaaaahhh!


I know!
You'll run into the barrier.
Lord Takaya! Take care not to go too high.

I will abide by your judgment.
You go... see... feel, and decide.
Lord Risson...
What is it that you want me to judge?
This village is paradise.

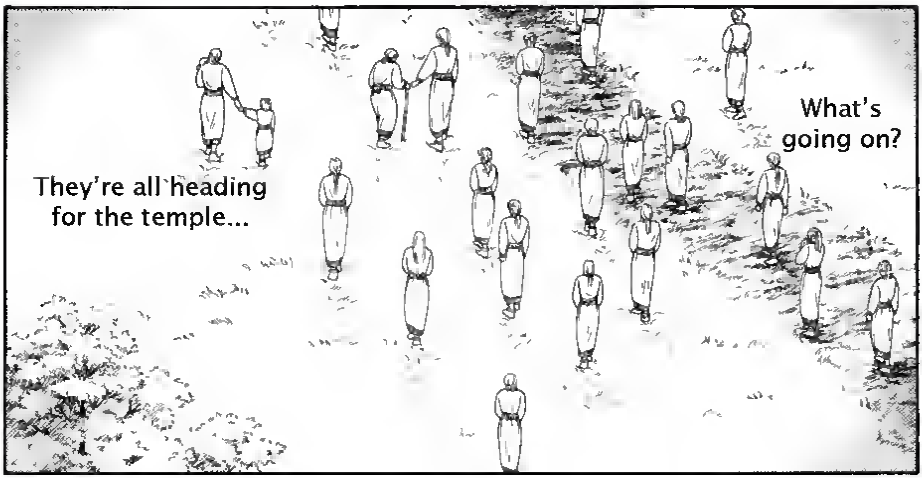
Here, people never worry about tomorrow.

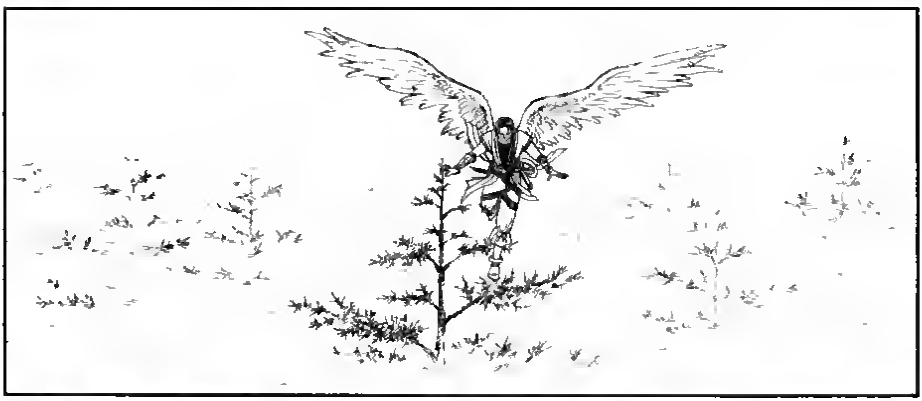
They don't grieve over yesterday.

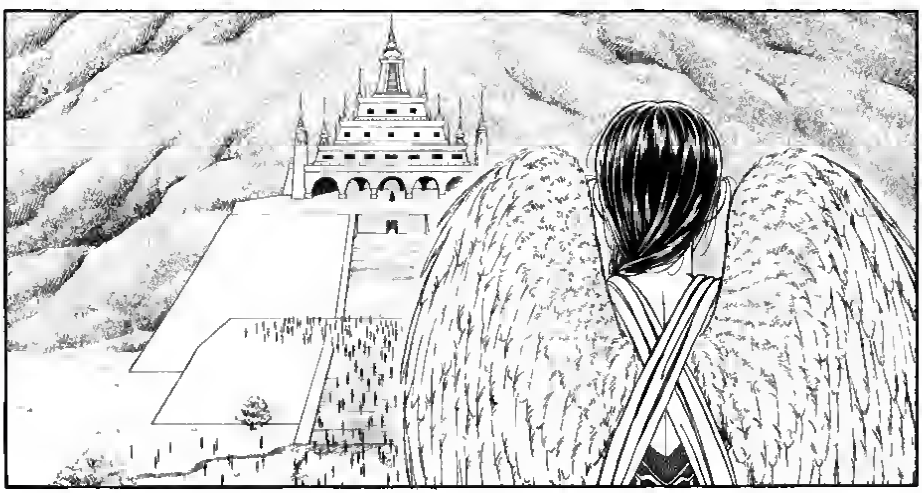
They can just live, in the sunlight, like flowers.

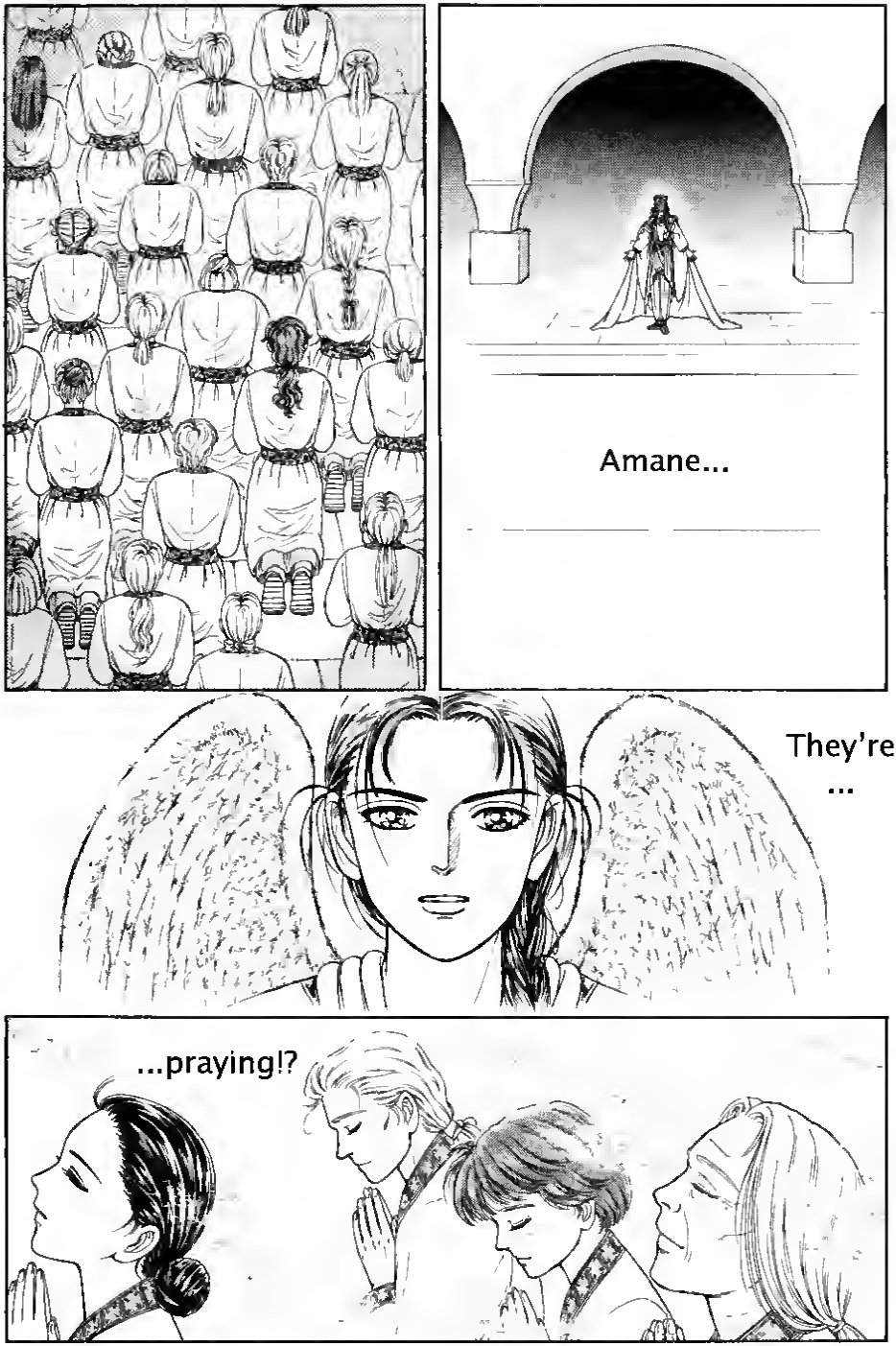
...to someone like me? What was your purpose?

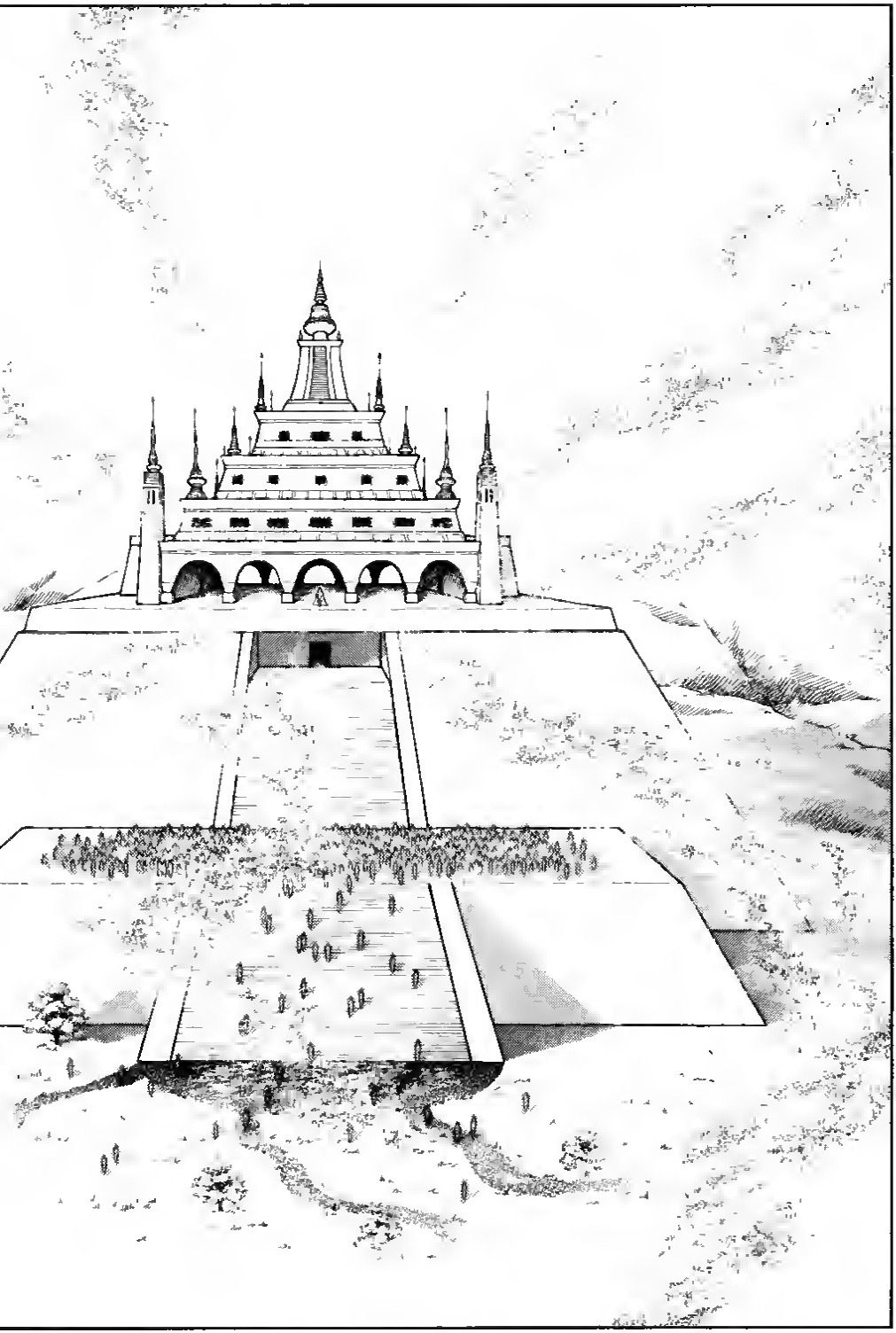
Why did you give your divine name...


What's going on?
They're all heading for the temple...

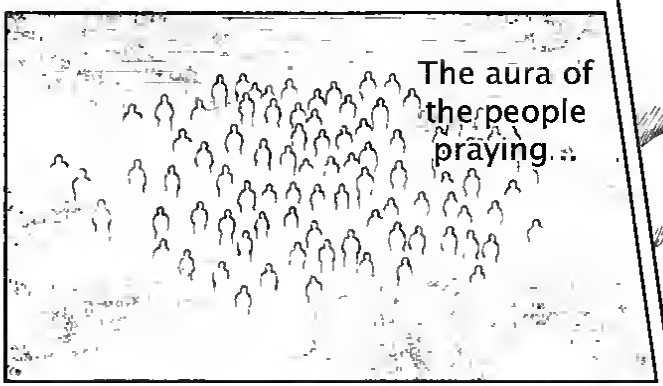


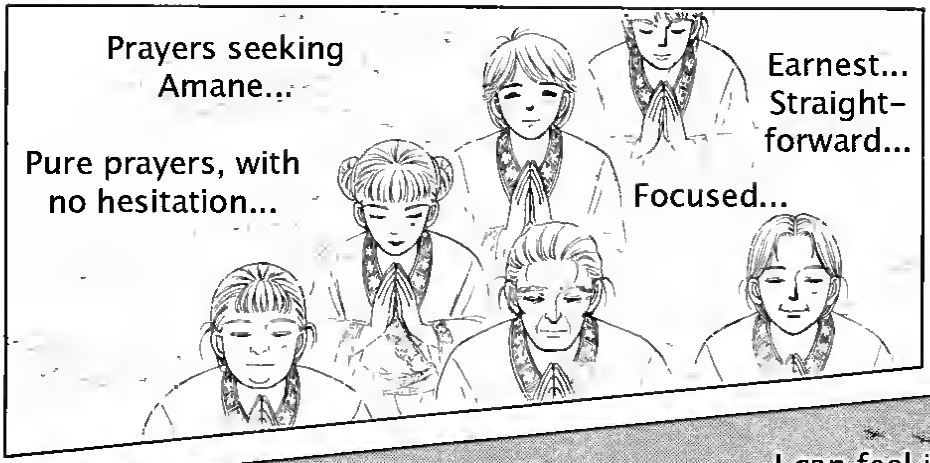



Amane...
They're ...
...praying!?



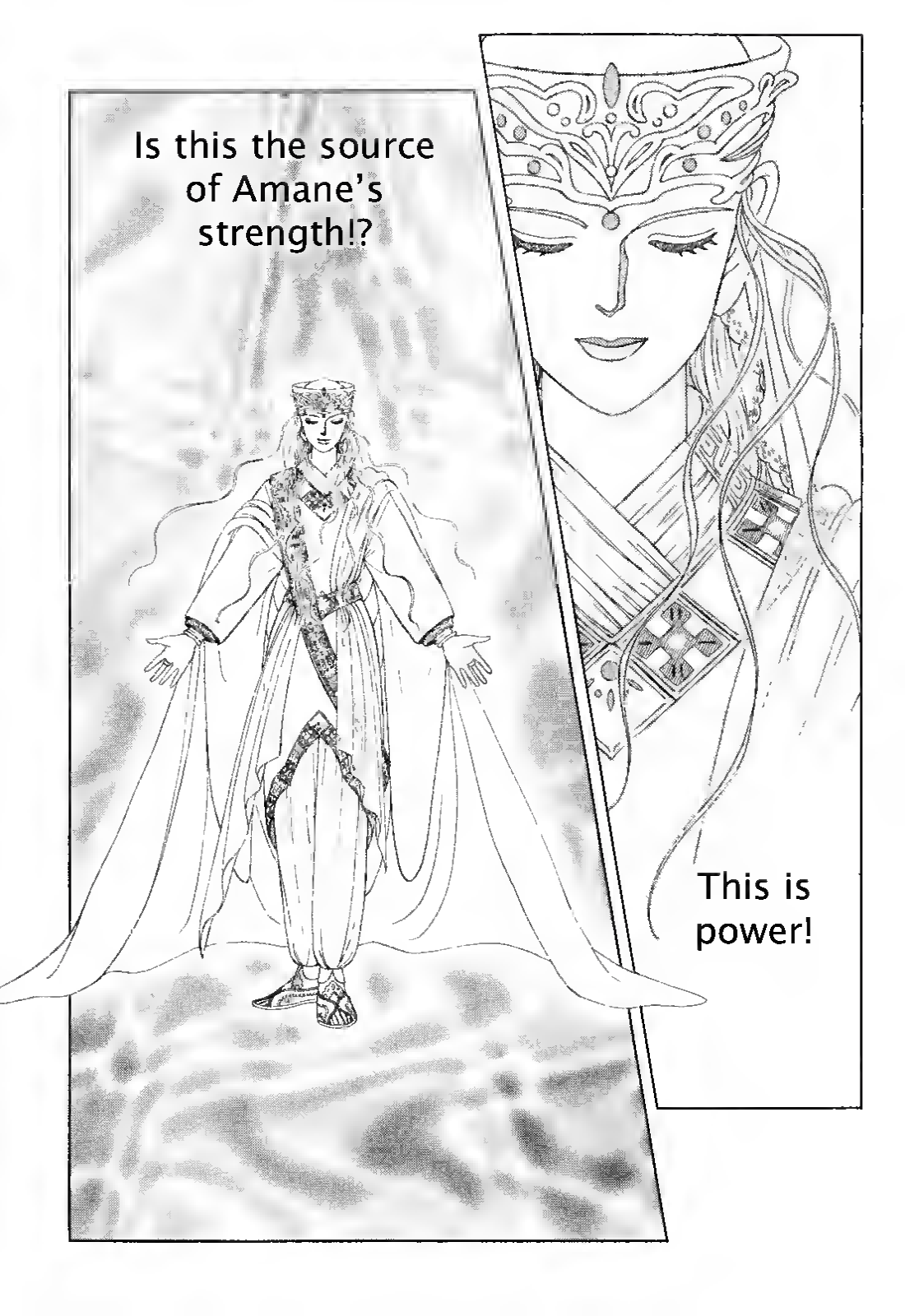
The will behind the prayers...


The aura of the people praying...

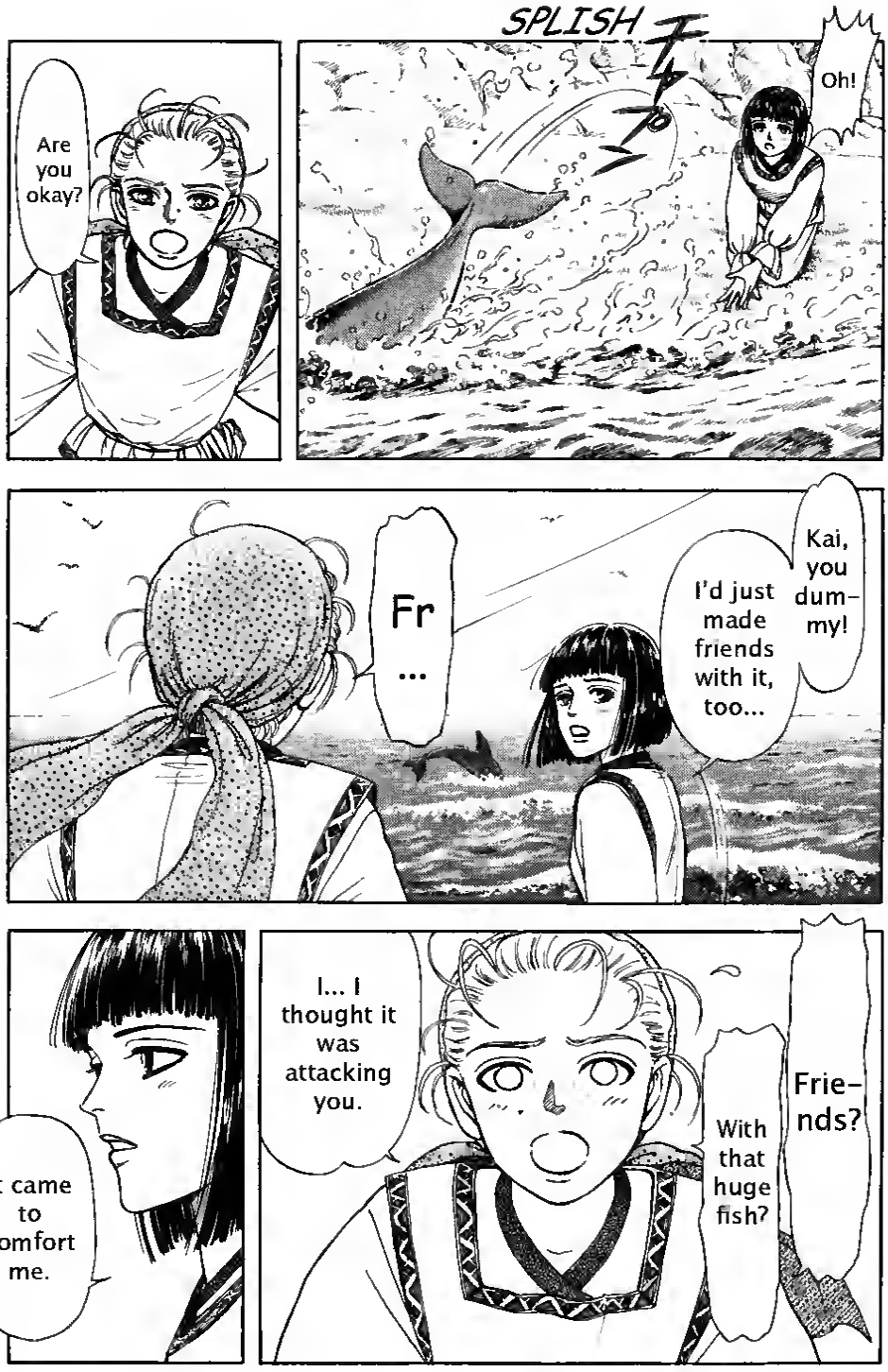

Prayers seeking Amane...
Pure prayers, with no hesitation...
Earnest... Straight-forward...
Focused...

I can feel it!
Prayers offered to Amane with all their hearts, minds and strength...
A will so great it beats against me...

...This is...


Is this the source of Amane's strength!?
This is power!

FWOOOSH
Tamia!
Get away from that, Tamia!



★ Huge fish = He means the dolphin.

Well, I... I just knew it had.
The fish did?
Um-mm
It came from beyond the horizon ...
...just to comfort me.
Come to think of it, Takaya said Toko can talk to plants...
I knew right away.
The smell of the tide ...
The sound of the surf ...
The color of the sea...
I've never seen it, but ...
It's so familiar.

Tamia!
What are you talking about?
I...
I want to go home to the sea.

They'll reach my face soon ...
Don't cry!
Don't cry!

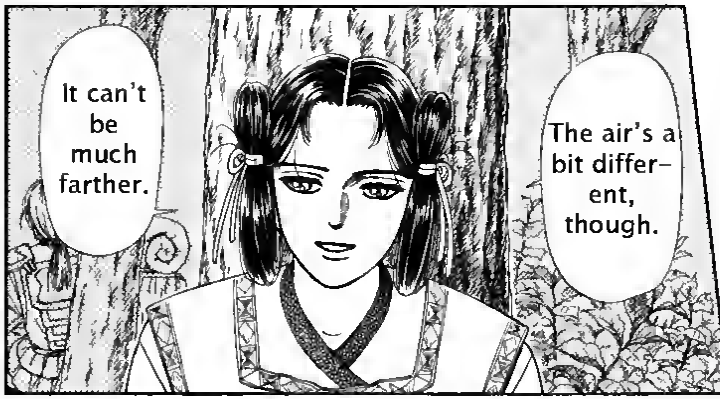
Th-that goes for me, too.
You said you'd like me no matter what I was, remember?
We're friends for life.
I'll like you no matter what your face looks like.

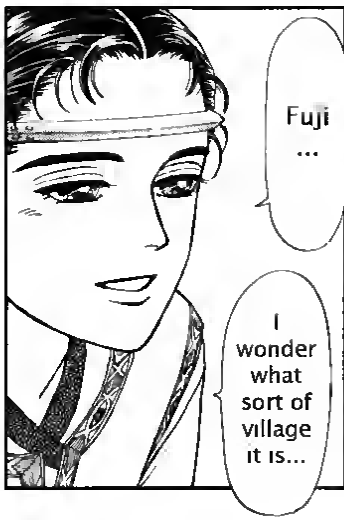
Get away from the shore!
Heeeeey! Big wave!
FOOM
Ahh!

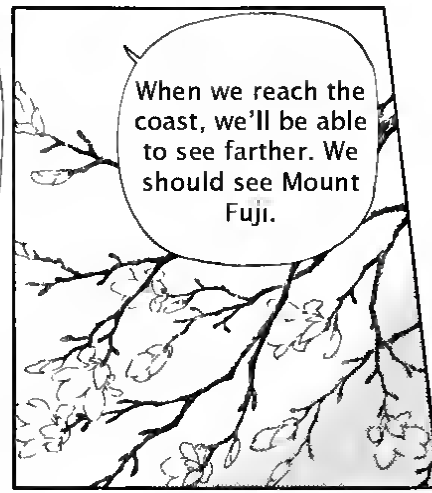
...
Huh?
Wha
...!?

Um ... Uh-h uh.
The wave avoi-ded us?
Here comes the next one!
Ha ha ha ha!
Ah ha ha ha!

Is the ocean still far?



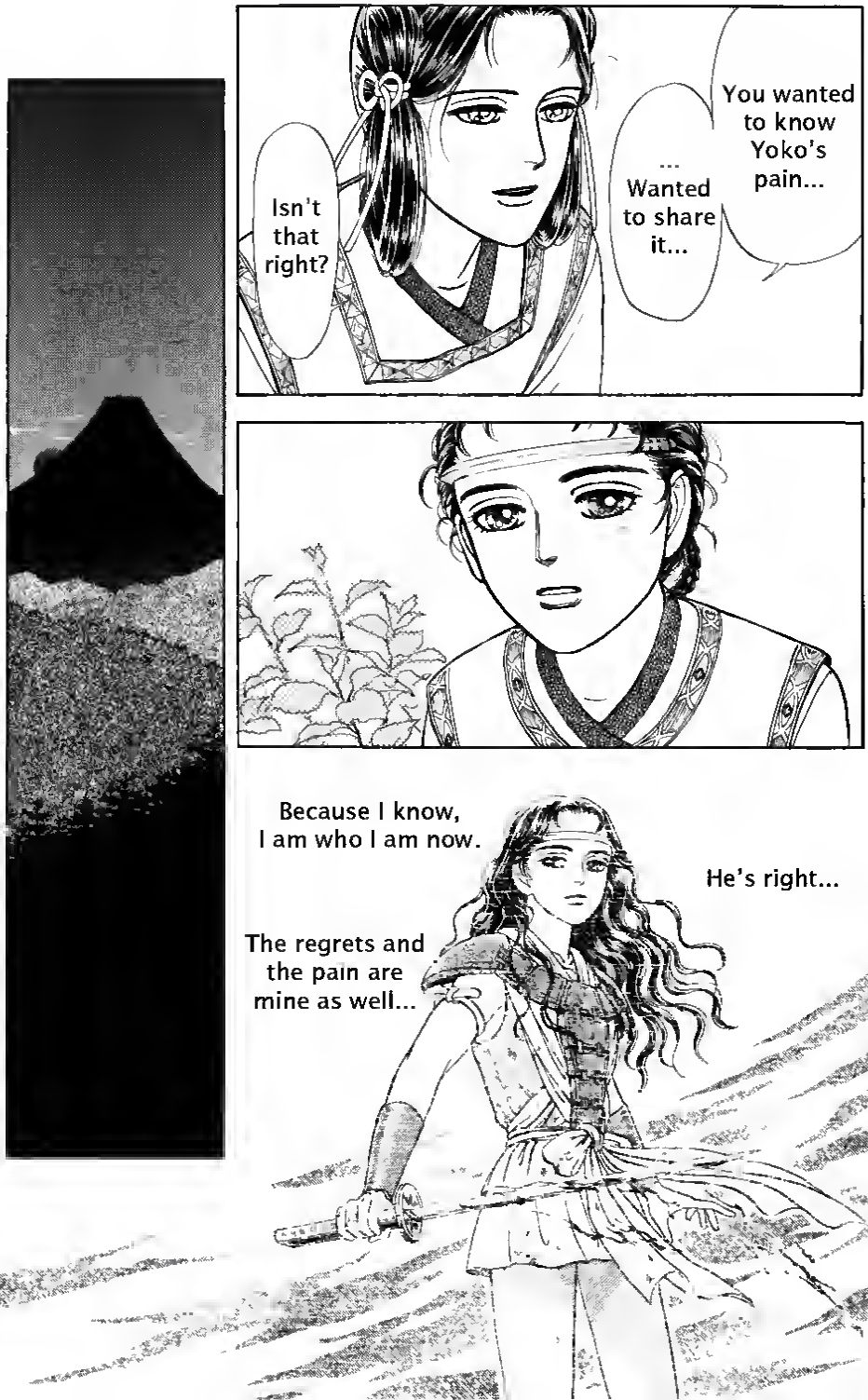




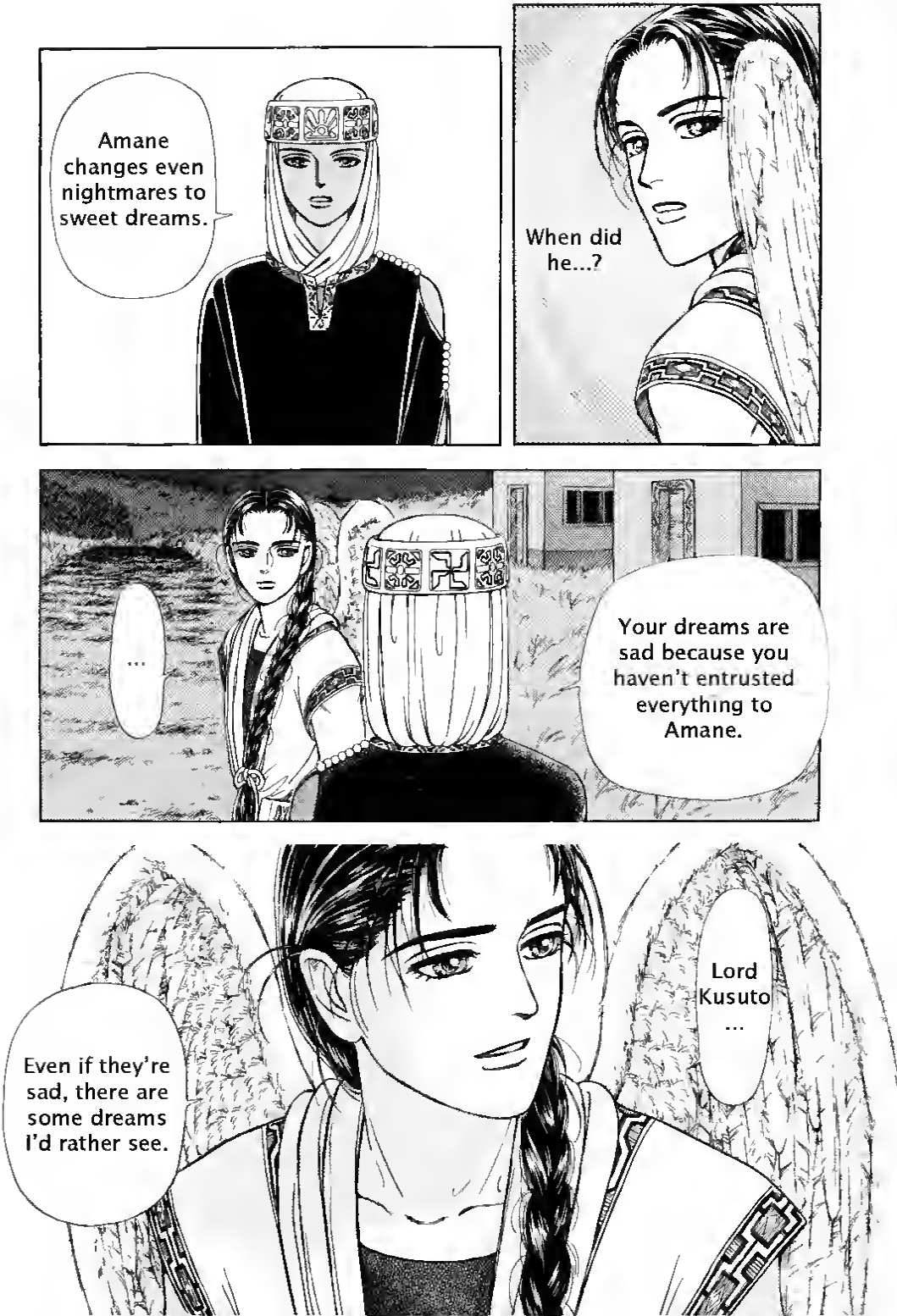
Kyoji, if you kill any of Fuji's villagers, I'll never forgive you.
I haven't swung a sword in ages.
HEH HEH
I can't wait.
Then what about those guys from earlier?
Absolutely not!
I said no!
I'm a demo n god war- rior!
Don't be like that!
They'll be more fun anyway.
The guys that messed with you.
I can kill them, right?

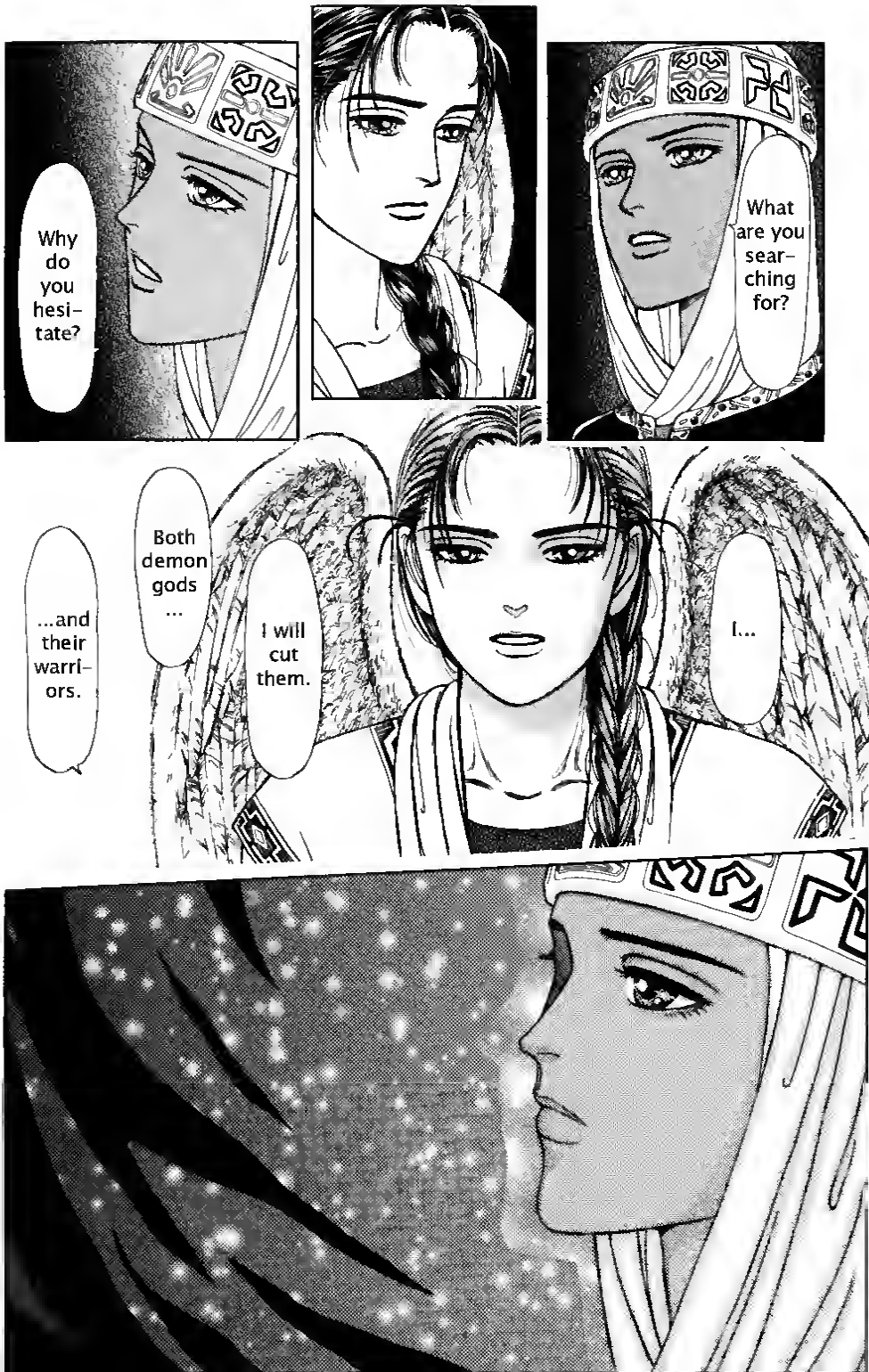
My head's tingling.
Dodging swords, trading blows...
Grabbing that split-second chance and slashing through flesh...
Stop it!
I... I'm sorry.
Just stop ...

I know it. That's why.
That shuddering ecstasy ...
You've gotta know what I'm talking about, Yoko.
But ...
That's why.
It's always better to know.
I don't think there's anything best left unknown.
Toko ...


You wanted to know Yoko's pain...
... Wanted to share it...
Isn't that right?
He's right...
The regrets and the pain are mine as well...
Because I know, I am who I am now.

Not a single person struggles with night-mares.
... Not here.


Amane changes even nightmares to sweet dreams.
When did he...?
...
Your dreams are sad because you haven't entrusted everything to Amane.
Even if they're sad, there are some dreams I'd rather see.
Lord Kusuto ...


Why do you hesitate?
What are you searching for?
...and their warriors.
Both demon gods ...
I will cut them.
I...

I want you to walk with me...
You should walk with me.
You must...
Lord Kusu-to!?
Pre tend we're very close ...

I'll tell you. Only you.
About Mu...
About the Mamana...
About Asuka ...

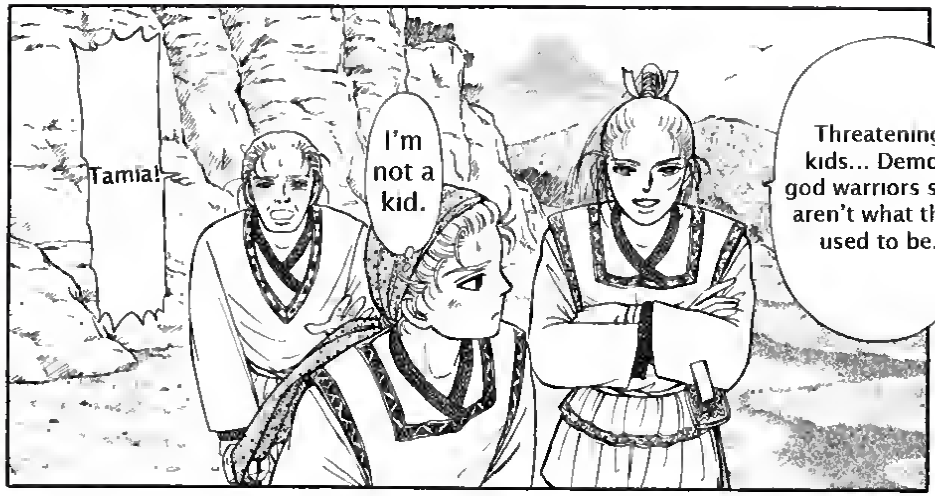
This person...
Kusto isn't used to touching people...
To the crystal shrine ...
Come to my cham ber...
...isn't used to this.
Kusto is as frightened as a young girl.
There, if I wish it so, even demigods can't see us...
The eyes of Kusto lures me with challenge and yet...

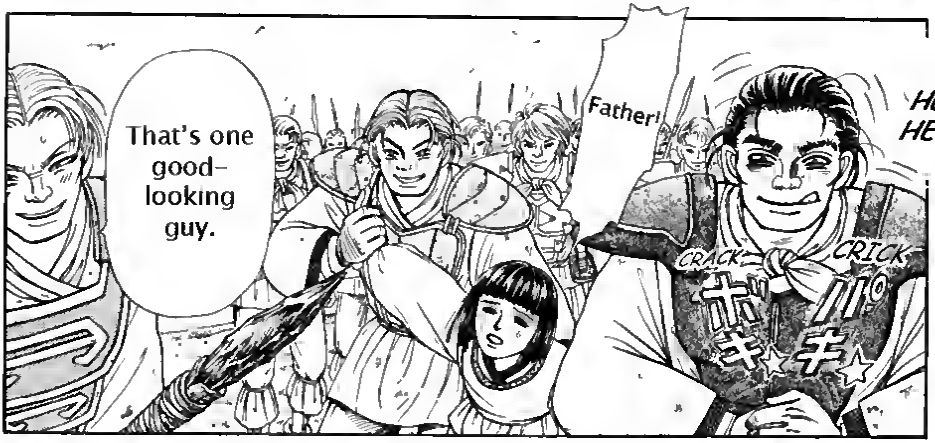
You can see 'em now!
When Tamia calls them, lots of big fish come to her!
It's so cool!
No... I'd like to see that.
Don't push him.
Hakuji's finally feeling better.
Tamia can even control the waves!
You come too, Katsura!

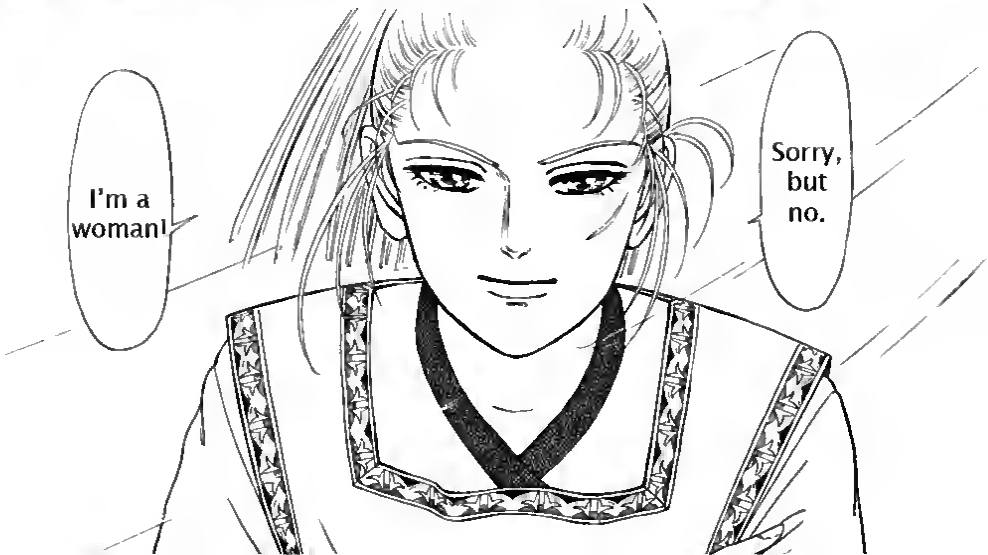
TAK
Whoa!
Look at this girl's skin!
Don't ...!

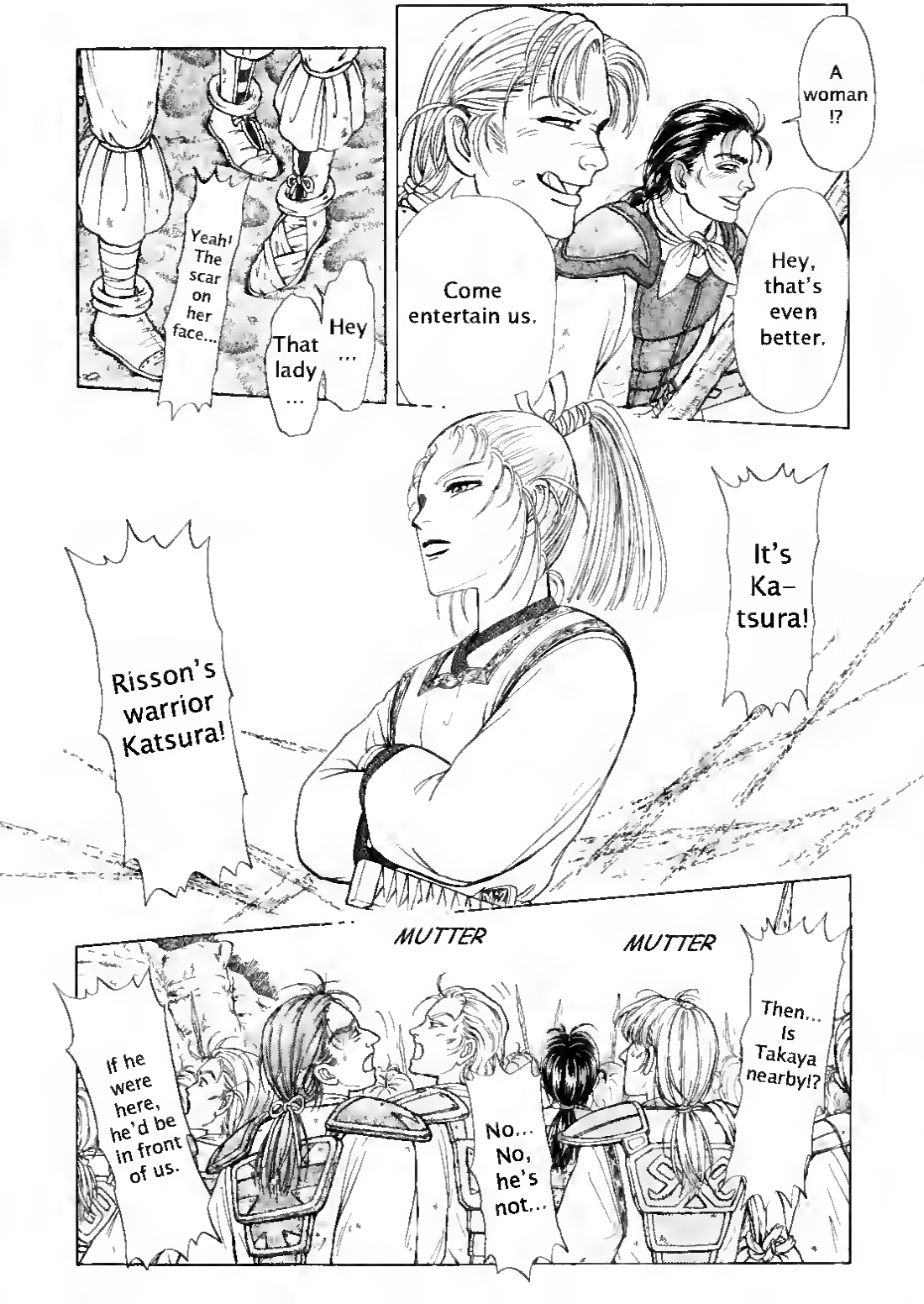
Tamia!
Tamia!
You bas-tards!
Kai!
Demon god warriors!?

Just sit tight and watch.
Shad- dup, brat!
We'll show you what this monster looks like naked.
Let Tamia go!
I told you... let her go!
SHING
Want us to skin you and dunk you in the ocean?
We'll strip you, too!


Tamia!
I'm not a kid.
Threatening kids... Demon god warriors sure aren't what they used to be.

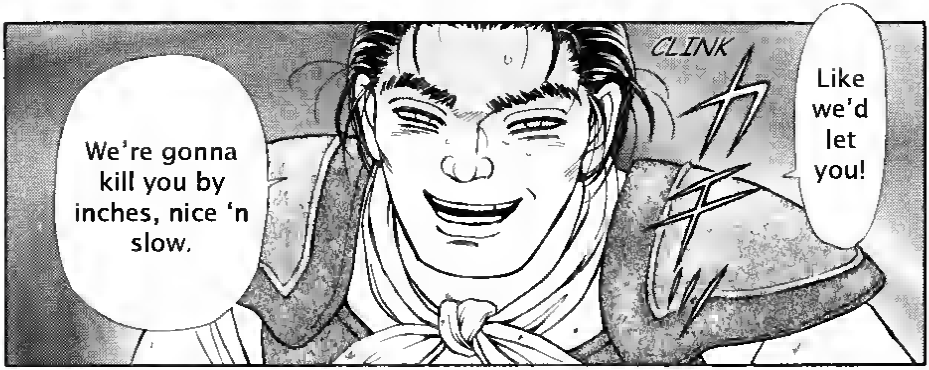

That's one good-looking guy.
Father!
HEH HEH
CRACK
CRICK

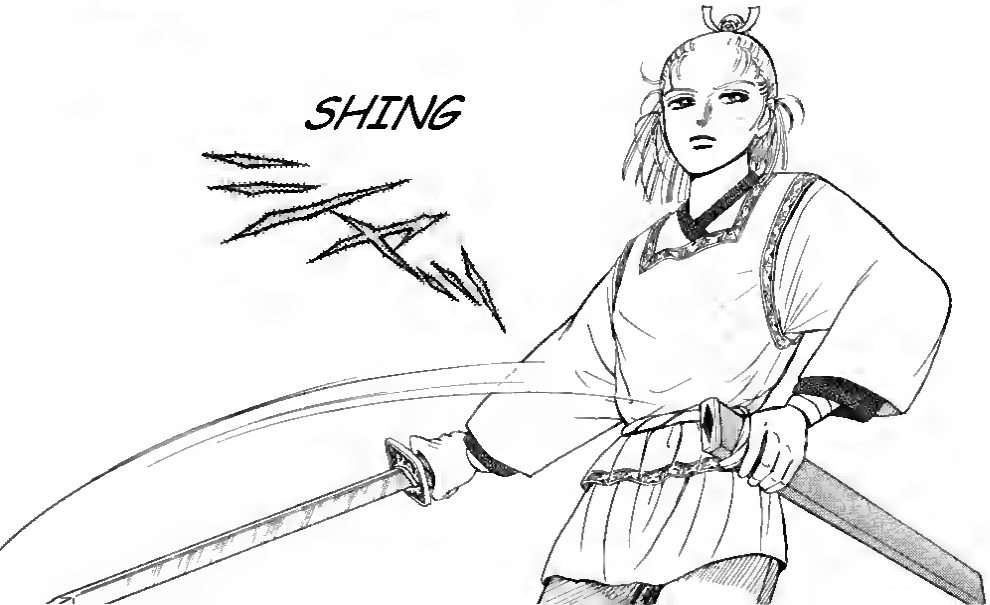

I'm a woman!
Sorry, but no.


Yeah! The scar on her face...
That lady ...
Hey ...
Come entertain us.
A woman !?
Hey, that's even better.
Risson's warrior Katsura!
It's Ka-tsura!
MUTTER
MUTTER
If he were here, he'd be in front of us.
No... No, he's not...
Then... Is Takaya nearby!?

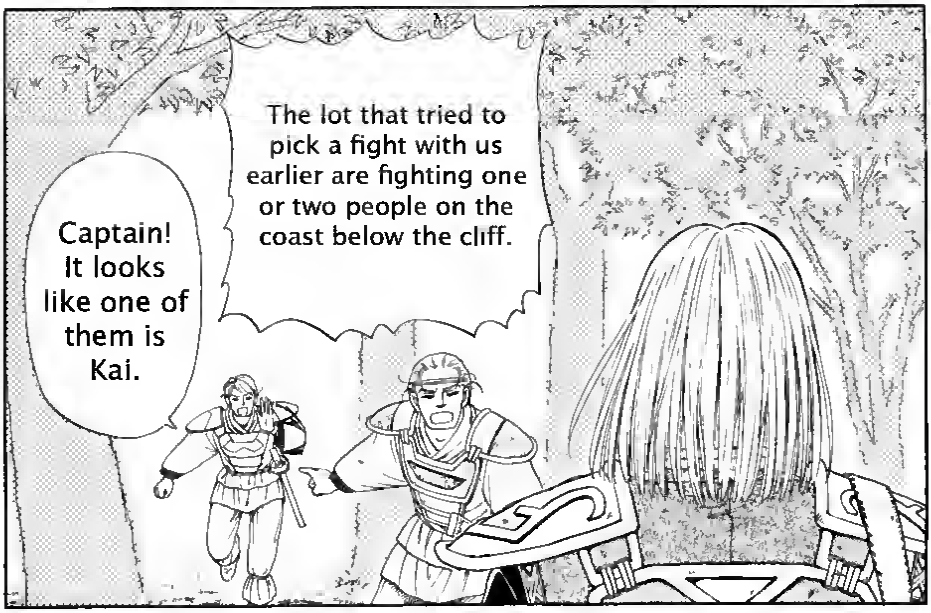
...And you'll spare our lives?
Release that girl and get lost!
HEH HEH HEH
Are you planning to take us all on by yourself?
Where's Takaya?
Step off, brat!
I'm here, too!

No way!
Kai! Take Hakuji and run!

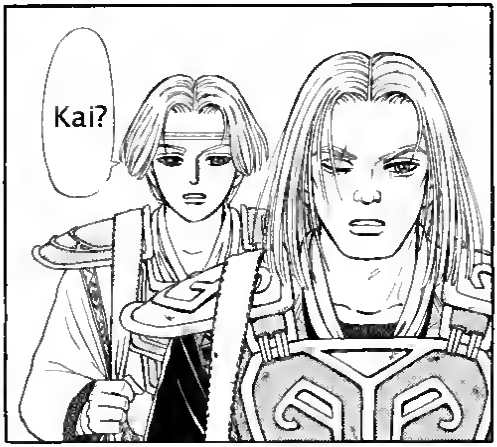

CLINK
We're gonna kill you by inches, nice 'n slow.
Like we'd let you!


SHING

If you listen hard, I bet you can hear the surf.
The sea's close.
I smell it!
I can smell it.
SNIFF SNIFF
Really!?
Cap-tain!
Yes ...
That's the sound of swords.
Aohiko!


The lot that tried to pick a fight with us earlier are fighting one or two people on the coast below the cliff.
Captain! It looks like one of them is Kai.

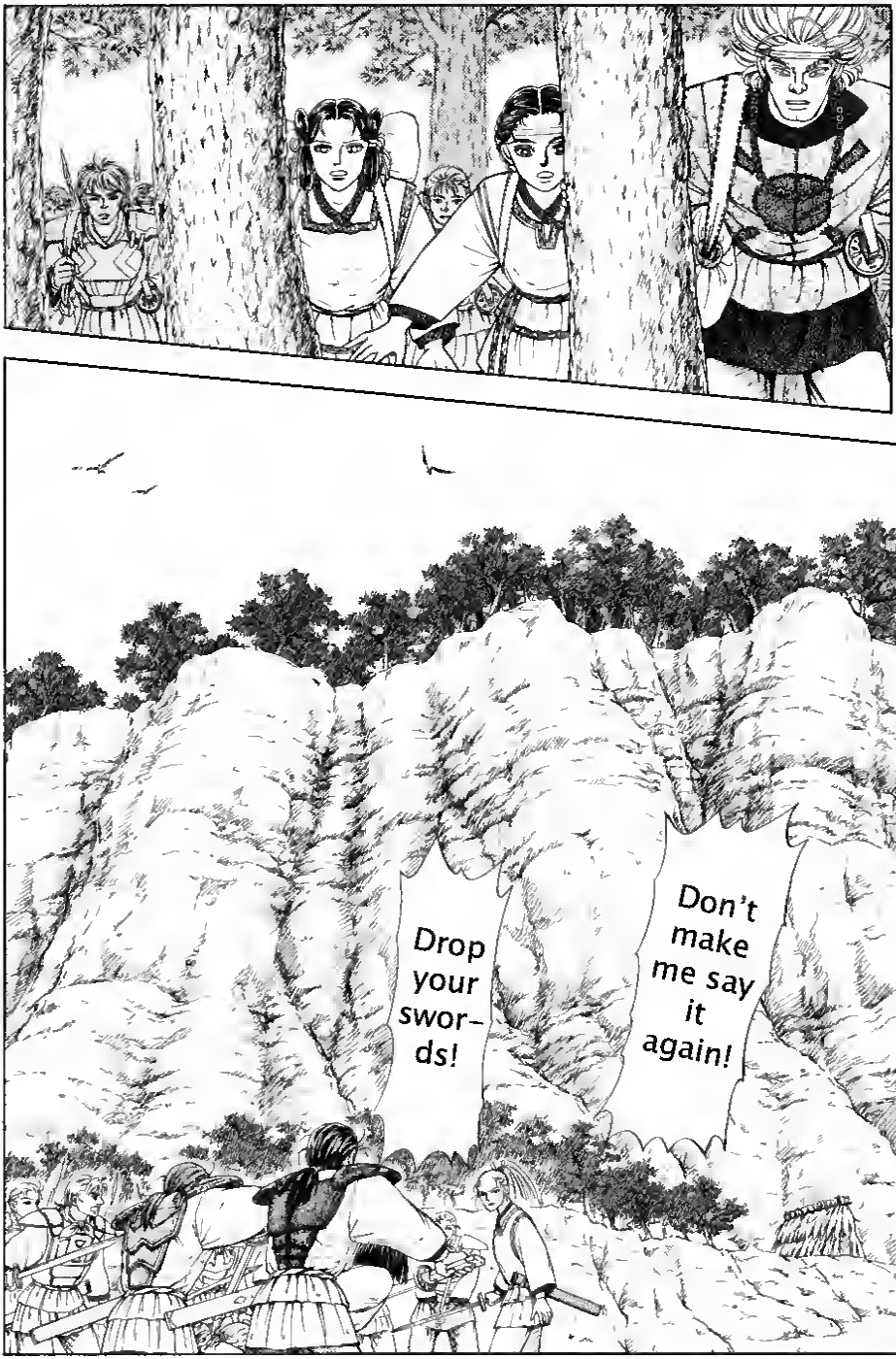
Kai!


Kai?

Kai!?

WAGH
Don't under-estimate kids!
SKASH
Drop your swords!

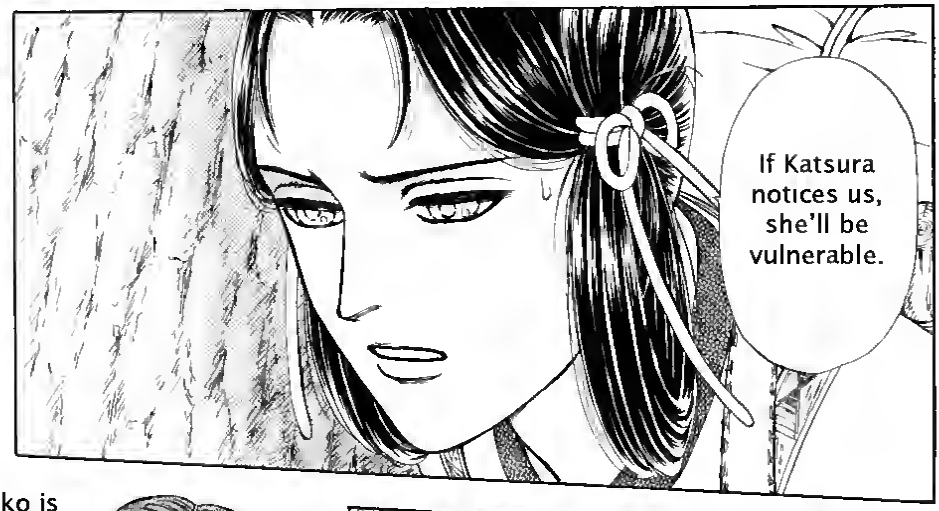
I thought you were going to take your time and kill us by inches.
You cowards!
If we take longer, we'll be stuck burying our comrades until dawn.
We've taken enough time.
They're down below!
You can see 'em from here.


Drop your swor-ds!
Don't make me say it again!

Katsu-
ra!

Nachi!?
SHUF
That's ... Kat-sura?
Nachi!

Aohiko!
Besides, how would you get down the cliff!?
No way.
A sword!
Lend me a sword!
Don't shout.


If Katsura notices us, she'll be vulnerable.

Aohiko is screaming ...
I can hear it...

Aohi ko...

Katsura!
Katsura!
That's a lie!
Drop your sword and they'll kill us all.
Drop your sword and we'll let the other three live.

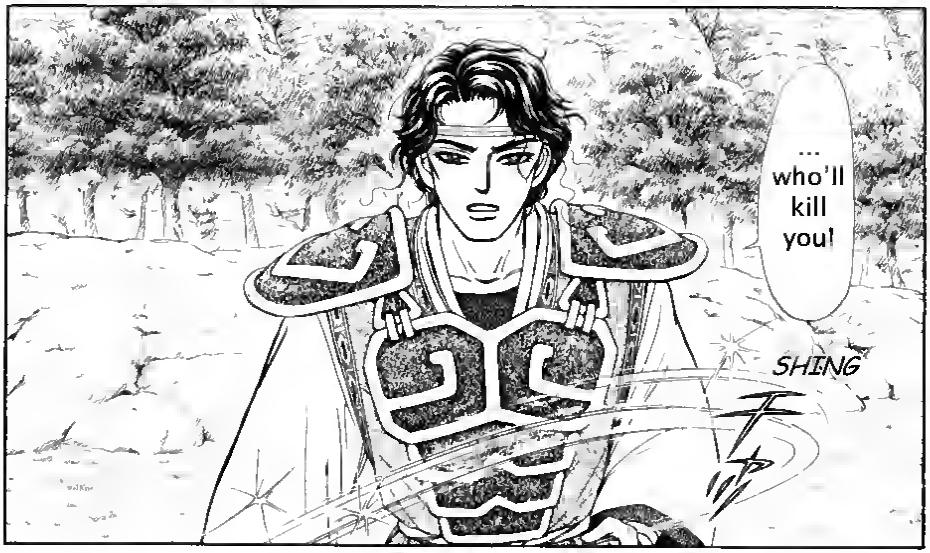
What a pain! Let's just kill the freak and start the bloodbath!
NOOOOOOOO!
WHIRR
WHIRR

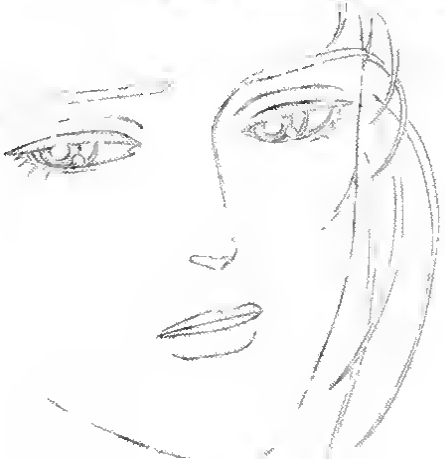
SKASH
Aaahhhhh!
Gwah!
Ughk!

Ah!
Oh...
...Wow. He actually got down the cliff?
WHOA
Ichi-rota!

That's Nachi!
Wasn't he...
That guy ...
H... hey ...

Ah ...!



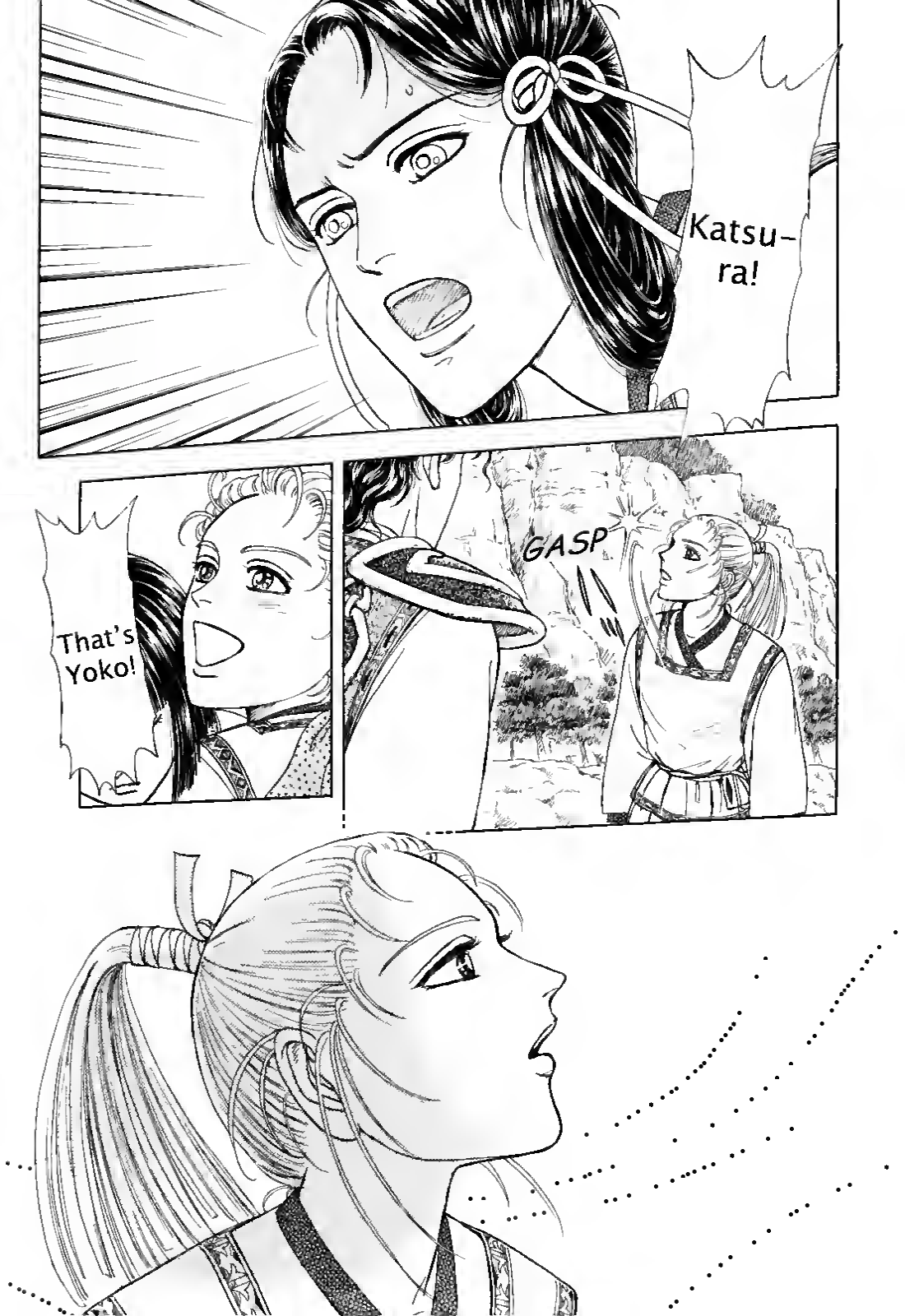


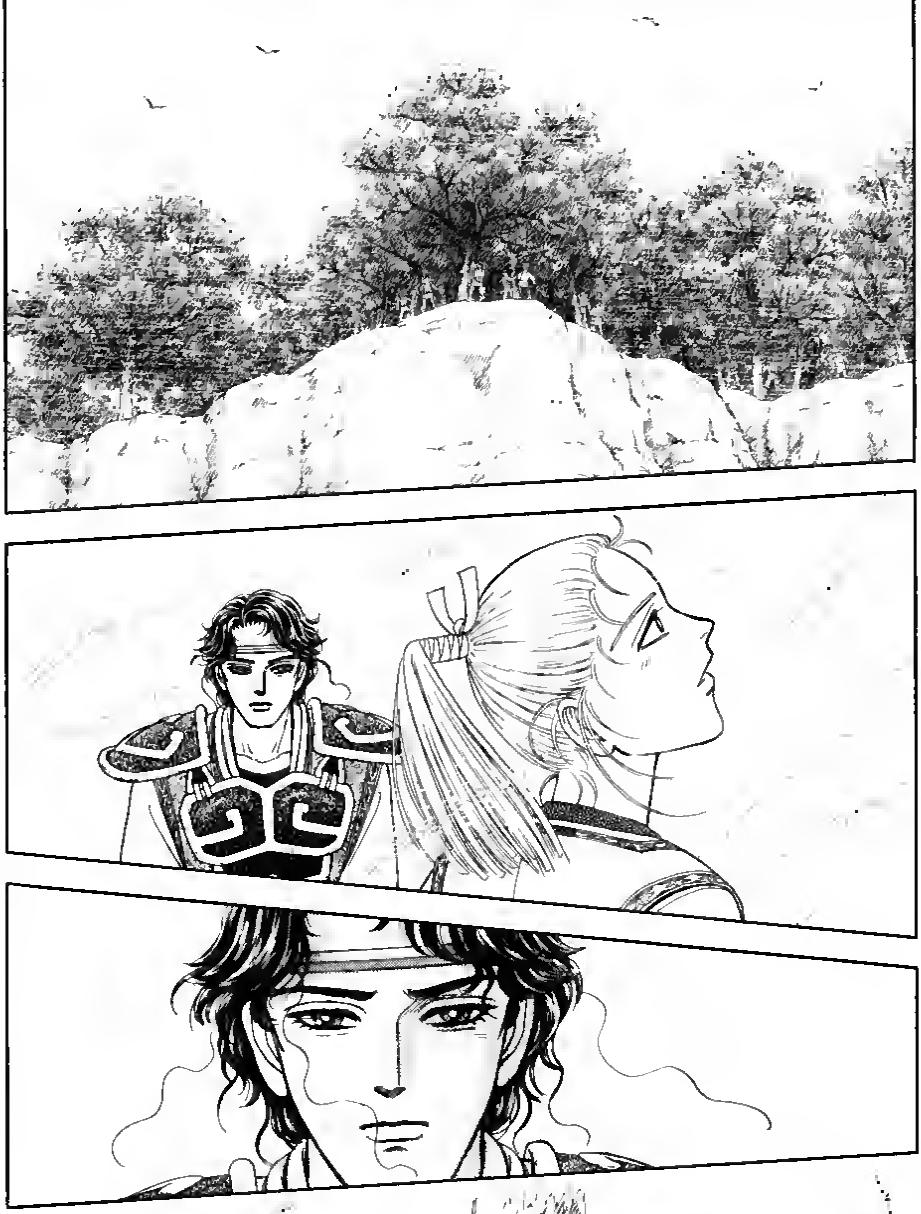
Ichirota...

Tamia!
Ah...
HISSSS
AGH
HISSSS
HISSSS
Wha...
Uhh!
HISSSSS
Ah...
Ah...
Ah...

UOOO OOH
GWA-AH
Tamia! Stop!
Ah ...
GASP
Huh!?
Th-the ocean's rising!
Aohi-ko!

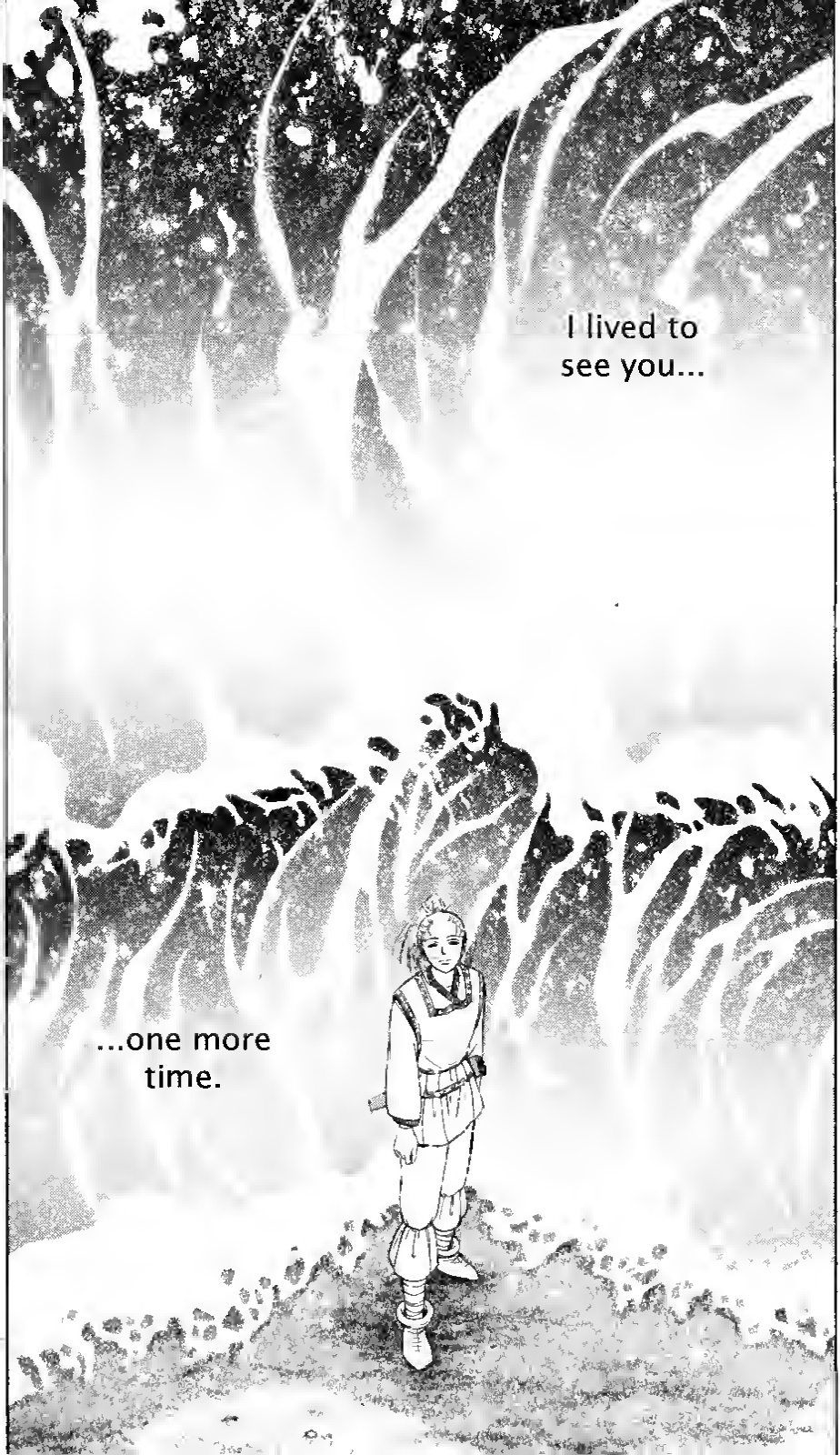
A tsunami!?
Ichi-
rota...
Katsura, run!
The ocean's...!
Kai!


Katsu-
ra!
GASP
That's
Yoko!


Aohiko...

I got to see him!
I saw him...
FOOOOOOOOM
ゴゴゴゴゴゴゴゴ
Ka... Kat-sura!
The ocean's ...
I got to see him!

I got to see...
you...
Kaiii!
Katsur-aaa!


I lived to
see you...
...one more
time.

Aohiko!

The one I longed for so much it nearly drove me mad...

Itihasa 11

Author
Wakako Mizuki

Copyright
© Wakako Mizuki

First e-book edition-May 2015

Publisher
Creek & River Co., Ltd
C&R Group Bldg.,
2-10-9, Kojimachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo Japan 102-0083

For more information, visit the site below.
"Japan Authors' Gallery KAORI"
http://www.cri.co.jp/KAORI/